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ABSTRACT

A summary of the activities and results of the 1980 White House Conference on Families (WHCF) is given in this document. Following introductory material, the development, adoption, and ranking of the conference recommendations are described. Recommendations made in four main areas of concern (families and economic well-being, confronting specific problems of families, meeting the needs of families, and determining the role of major institutions that influence the family life) are listed. Minority reports by delegates representing racial and ethnic minorities as well as guidelines and contact persons for implementation and advocacy activities are included. A subsequent section on preparation for the conference features the schedule of conference activities; outcomes of national hearings; delegate selection procedures of the states; highlights of a research forum held to provide a framework of factual information for the delegates; and pertinent census data and Gallup Survey results. The final section provides a brief review of events at each of the three conference sites (Baltimore, Minneapolis, Los Angeles). Publications on the WHCF are listed in the appendices. (Author/MP)

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WHITE HOUSE CONFERENCE ON FAMILIES

Listening to America's Families

Action For the 80's

A Summary of The Report to The President, Congress and Families of the Nation

This summary highlights the recommendations of the White House Conference on Families and the activities which led up to it. For a more detailed discussion, the full Report is available at a cost of $6.50 from the Superintendent of Documents, U.S. Government Printing Office, Washington, D.C. 20402. (stock number 040-000-00429-7)

November, 1980

The White House Conference on Families
330 Independence Avenue, S.W.
Washington, D.C. 20201

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This document attempts to briefly summarize the activities and results of the White House Conference on Families. It includes recommendation summaries developed by the 117-member National Task Force, as well as highlights of Conference hearings, state events, Research Forum and other activities. A more thorough description and analysis will be found in the full Report. This larger document contains the full text of all recommendations, a more thorough analysis of minority reports, lists of all delegates and presenters, as well as greater detail on state activities and other Conference events. The full Report is available from the Superintendent of Documents, U.S. Government Printing Office, Washington, D.C. 20402 at a cost of $6.50. Ask for document #040-000-0429-7.

A Presidential Commitment

"I have received the Report of the White House Conference on Families, and I want to thank the 125,000 Americans who helped to produce it. I am determined that their efforts will lead to real improvement in policies and programs to strengthen and support the American family as an institution.

"This Conference has reaffirmed the central role that families play in our national life. It has documented the ways in which our major institutions, including government, ignore and even undermine families. With unprecedented openness and broad participation, the Conference has produced a mandate and an agenda for action.

"The consensus on the major recommendations is a remarkable achievement and shows how Americans of different backgrounds and beliefs can unite around a specific program. The delegates' principal recommendations lay out a practical, moderate and sensible agenda to combat the insensitivity that so often characterizes the attitude of our major institutions toward the family.

President Jimmy Carter delivers the keynote address to the Baltimore White House Conference on Families.

"When I addressed the Conference in Baltimore, I said 'I will do all I can to make sure your report does not sit on the shelves.' We are already working to implement the recommendations of the White House Conference on Families:

1. We are today bringing into the White House leaders of major corporations to discuss the Conference recommendation dealing with family-oriented personnel policies.
2. I have recently proposed a change in our tax laws to reduce the 'marriage tax penalty.' Enactment of this deduction will lessen the most obvious form of tax discrimination against families.
3. I have established an Office for Families in the Department of Health and Human Services to help ensure a voice for families and to follow up on these recommendations.
4. I am directing all federal departments and key agencies to undertake a thorough analysis of their policies and programs in light of the recommendations contained in the Report of the White House Conference on Families, and to develop detailed plans for implementing Conference proposals.
5. We will continue to work with the National Advisory Committee of the White House Conference on Families, its chairperson, Jim Guy Tucker and its director, John Carr, who have done a superb job in making this Conference a success.
6. We will also continue to work with the private and voluntary organizations that represent and serve American families. Since many of the recommendations are directed not at government, but at business, labor, religious groups, social services, media and other private groups, their involvement in implementation is crucial.

"These steps are only the beginning of a long-term effort to enhance family strengths and to reverse the neglect of families that characterizes all too many of the decisions and actions undertaken in our society.

"I am proud of the way this Conference listened to and involved so many American families, of the way it has put families at the center of national discussion, of the way it has found consensus and agreement where many predicted only conflict. The White House Conference on Families has brought us from rhetoric to action, from principles to programs, from a vision to an actual plan for strengthening and supporting the families of our Nation."

Jimmy Carter
President of the United States
October 22, 1980

National Advisory Committee:

Guiding the Process

The White House Conference on Families was guided by a 40-member National Advisory Committee consisting of 21 men and 19 women, ages 18 to 66, representing diverse racial, ethnic, and political backgrounds. It included persons with expertise in economics, health, law, education, psychology, welfare, and family policy, as well as leaders in business, religious, labor, social service and neighborhood organizations.

Chairperson

Jim Guy Tucker, Little Rock, Arkansas. Former Attorney General and U.S. Representative from Arkansas. Currently, partner in the Little Rock law firm of Tucker and Stafford, and Washington, D.C. law firm of Lobel, Novins and Lamont.

Deputy Chairpersons

Mario M. Cuomo, New York, New York. Lieutenant Governor of New York.

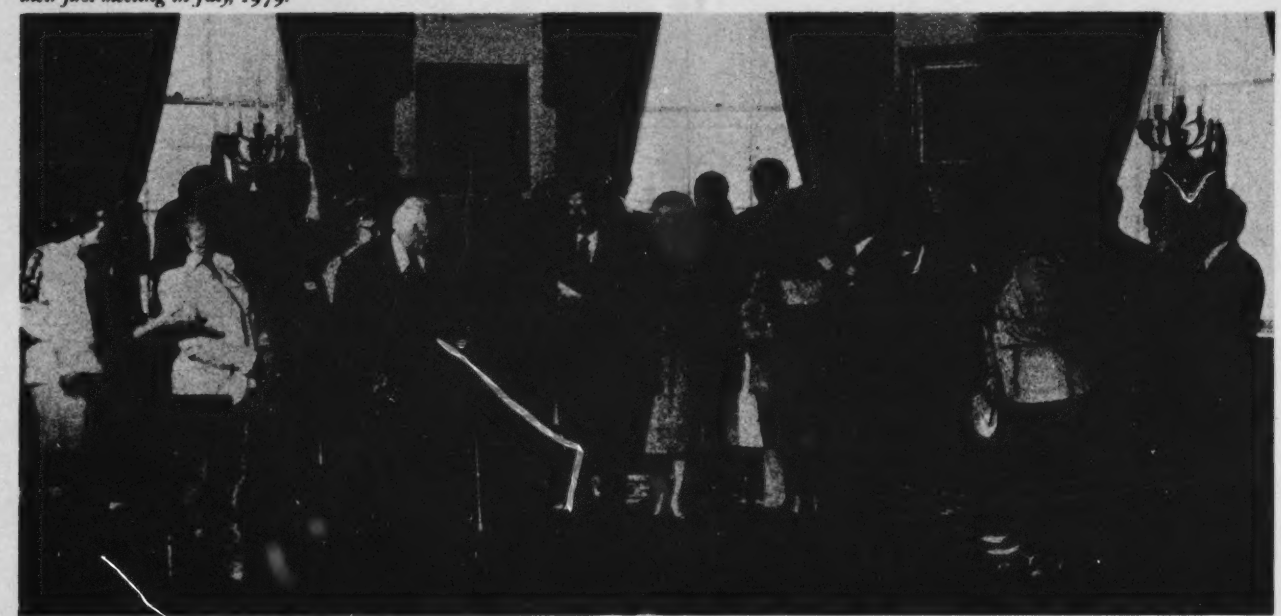
Guadalupe Gibson, San Antonio, Texas. Associate Professor, Worden School of Social Service, Our Lady of the Lake University.

Coretta Scott King, Atlanta, Georgia. President, Martin Luther King Center for Social Change.

Maryann Mahaffey, Detroit, Michigan. President Pro Tem, Detroit City Council; and Professor, School of Social Work, Wayne State University.

Donald V. Seibert, New York, New York. Chairman and Chief Executive Officer, J. C. Penney Company, Inc.

President and Mrs. Carter greet the National Advisory Committee at the White House after their first meeting in July, 1979.



Members

James A. Autry, Des Moines, Iowa. Vice President, and Editor-in-Chief, Meredith Corporation.

Charles D. Bannerman, Greenville, Mississippi. Chairman, Delta Foundation; and Director, Mississippi Action for Community Education.

Jeanne Cahill, Atlanta, Georgia. President, Cahill Properties, Inc.

Bettye Caldwell, Little Rock, Arkansas. Professor and Director, Center for Early Development and Education, University of Arkansas.

Ramona Carlin, Smolan, Kansas. First Lady of Kansas.

Gloria Chavez, Los Angeles, California. President, United Neighborhood Organization, Federation of East Los Angeles.

Leon F. Cook, Minneapolis, Minnesota. President, American Indian Resource Services.

Mary Cline Derrick, Elgin, Illinois. National staff member, Church of the Brethren.

Manuel Diaz, Jr., New York, New York. Associate Professor, Fordham University Graduate School of Social Service.

Ruby Duncan, Las Vegas, Nevada. Founder and Executive Director, Operation Life.

Karen Fenton, Missoula, Montana. Director, Human Resources Development Program, Confederated Salish and Kootenai Tribes.

Norman S. Fenton, Tucson, Arizona Presiding Judge, Pima County Conciliation Court.

Robert B. Hill, Washington, D.C. Director of Research, National Urban League.

Robert L. Hill, Portland, Oregon. Chairman, Metropolitan Youth Commission.

Charlotte G. Holstein, Syracuse, New York. President, Loretto Geriatric Center; Chair, Committee on Jewish Family, AJC.

Harry N. Hollis, Jr., Nashville, Tennessee, Director, Family and Special Moral Concerns, Christian Life Commission, Southern Baptist Convention.

Jesse Jackson, Chicago, Illinois. National President, Operation PUSH.

A. Sidney Johnson, III, Bethesda, Maryland. Founder and Director, Family Impact Seminar, George Washington University.

Michael M. Karl, M.D., St. Louis, Missouri. Professor of Clinical Medicine, Washington University.

Judith Koberna, Cleveland, Ohio. Vice-President, Buckeye-Woodland Community Organization.

Olga M. Madar, Detroit, Michigan. President Emeritus, Coalition of Labor Union Women.

Harriette P. McAdoo, Columbia, Maryand. Professor, School of Social Work, Howard University.

Georgia L. McMurray, New York, New York. Deputy General Director, Community Service Society of New York.

Patsy Mink, Waipahu, Hawaii. National President, Americans for Democratic Action.

Rashey B. Moten, Kansas City, Missouri. Executive Director, Kansas City Catholic Charities.

Richard J. Neuhaus, New York, New York. Associate Pastor, Trinity Church; Editor, *Worldview.*

Robert M. Rice, Parkridge, New Jersey. Director of Policy Analysis and Development, Family Service Association of America.

Ildaura Murillo-Rohde, Seattle, Washington. Professor and Associate Dean, School of Nursing, University of Washington; President, Coalition of Hispanic Mental Health and Human Service Organizations.

Hirsch L. Silverman, West Orange, New Jersey. Chairman, Department of Education Administration, Seton Hall University.

Eleanor C. Smeal, Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania. President, National Organization for Women.

Barbara B. Smith, Salt Lake City, Utah. General President, Relief Society, Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints.

J. Francis Stafford, Baltimore, Maryland, Auxiliary Bishop, Archdiocese of Baltimore; Chairman, Bishops Committee on Marriage and Family.

J. C. Turner, Washington, D.C. President, International Union of Operating Engineers, AFL-CIO.

Harold Yee, San Francisco, California. Director, Asia, Inc.

Chairman's Message:

Agenda for Action

America is rediscovering its families. Our government, media, and other large institutions are remembering what most Americans never forgot—we live in families. President Carter called this Conference because he believed "official America had lost touch with family America." He felt that a gap had developed in the way government and other major institutions make decisions, that there was no conscious concern for how those decisions help, hurt or ignore families. As a result, we have policies which undermine family stability, programs intended to help families but which hurt them instead, and many efforts which do not serve families as well as they could because they ignore family ties and influences.

A Year of Listening and Involvement

The President sought to close this gap by bringing together scholars, public officials, leaders of religious and community groups and, most important, American families themselves in the first White House Conference on Families. He directed us to "reach out" and listen to ordinary American families. We have taken the Conference to the people in 14 days of national hearings, and 500 forums and conferences at the state and community level. We have done this not in one conference in Washington, but three White House Conferences in Baltimore, Minneapolis, and Los Angeles. This approach is far more open, poses greater risks and insures more controversy, but it also permitted us to tap deep and genuine feelings about the strengths and difficulties of American families and to lay the groundwork for practical action to strengthen and support families.

"This year of listening and involvement far exceeded our expectations."

The results of this year of listening and involvement far exceeded our expectations:

- More than 2,000 individuals came forth to share their personal stories and family concerns at our fourteen days of hearings in places like Hartford, Nashville, Seattle and Linsborg, Kansas.
- More than 125,000 Americans joined in selecting delegates and

issues in 500 state forums, hearings and conferences.

- Many of the nation's best minds shared their insights at our National Research Forum on Families in Washington.
- A cross-section of American families spoke out through the first comprehensive national poll on families conducted by the Gallup Organization.
- Two thousand delegates at three White House Conferences worked together to hammer out an agenda for families.
- A National Task Force of more than 100 Conference representatives summarized the delegates' proposals and began the task of converting words to action.

What We've Learned

We've discovered that Americans care passionately about their families. Families are our most important institution, the glue that holds this society together. No alternative can replace it or improve on it.

We learned that families are under unprecedented economic, social and even political pressures—and that our major institutions are too often a source of these pressures. Many families are overcoming them and prevailing. Many others are struggling and some have been overwhelmed and broken.

We've learned that our families are enormously diverse — regionally, racially, ethnically and structurally. Discrimination and poverty intensify the pressures facing families, but all families are finding it more difficult to cope with contemporary challenges. At the same time, we've learned that families of different races, regions and backgrounds share values and commitments of love, support, fidelity and responsibility toward their families.

We've learned that people are unwilling to put up with the continued neglect and harm to our families that come from thoughtless action and misdirected policies within our major social institutions. Families are moving from apathy to anger to action. They insist on changes in unresponsive and insensitive policies.

> **"Being present at a gathering of such a large group of individuals whose concern is the welfare of the family gives me hope for the future and confidence that the family will endure. My sons are too young to appreciate the significance of this conference but, in time, they will be proud that their father had a role in it."**
>
> Edwin V. Gadecki, South Burlington, Vermont

An Agenda for Action

Finally, we've learned that families agree far more than they disagree on how to make our institutions more sensitive to their needs. By overwhelming margins, they are challenging business and labor to consider new policies and practices in the workplace to reduce the conflict between responsibilities as parents and employees. They want to take a hard look at flexible job schedules, more sensitive leave and transfer policies, child care at the workplace and other family-oriented personnel policies.

They strongly support increased efforts to prevent and treat drug and alcohol abuse, a major threat to family stability. They want specific changes in our Social Security and health policies to encour-

age care of elderly and disabled persons by their families rather than by strangers in institutions. They want to put an end to the unintended but still destructive tax, welfare, health and other governmental policies which discriminate against marriage and help break up families. They are insisting that government explicitly examine the impact of laws, rules and programs on the strength of families. They support greater assistance and support for families with handicapped members and greater recognition and equity for women who choose to be full-time homemakers.

> **"Families agree far more than they disagree on how to make our institutions more sensitive to their needs."**

They are also calling for the media to be more supportive of family values and stop over-emphasizing sex, violence and stereotypes. They strongly support efforts to combat racism, discrimination in employment and housing, and unemployment. They are calling for increased efforts to combat family violence and adolescent pregnancy. They support a variety of child care options. They want changes in our courts to diminish conflict and increase sensitivity. They are called for family life education and a real partnership between parents and teachers. In short, they want to replace the lip service families have been receiving with changes in policy which put families at the center of decision making. They want to trade rhetoric for genuine action.

This agenda comes not from some book or study, but from the voices and votes of thousands of Americans. It will disappoint those on both political extremes who use "family" as a new ideological code word. It will also disappoint those who predicted that the Conference would produce only conflict and dissension. It will surely disappoint those who said ordinary people could not discuss these issues because they were too complex or emotional. These proposals came from the most open process ever tried in a White House Conference. More than 80 percent of the delegates were selected by the states; many were elected. This Conference insisted that racial minorities and the poor had to be involved and that family professionals could not outnumber the people they serve.

Overcoming Fears

When we began our work some felt that WHCF would just be an exercise in nostalgia, ignoring changes in families and our society. Others felt we would seek to redefine the family and focus on extremes and aberrations. Still others felt the Conference could be a springboard for increased governmental intrusion into family life or a platform for destructive ideological conflict.

Those fears have been dissolved by the realities of this Conference. This Conference dealt with the situation of family life today; it reflected both the tensions and opportunities of our time and society. We did not focus on the bizarre or extreme. We did not redefine the family. Thanks to the good sense and good will of most of those who participated, we found broad areas of agreement which cut across

racial, religious, political and ideological lines. The Conference reflected the divisions and tensions in the country on abortion and other difficult issues, but it also demonstrated the consensus that exists for new directions in personnel policies, elimination of the bias against families in the nation's tax, social security and health policies, and greater support for families with handicapped members and full-time homemakers.

While some partisan interests sought to polarize the Conference, the overwhelming number of delegates found ways to work together and forge a creative agenda for families, an agenda which does not mean more government interference or regulation of family life. No one wants government in our bedrooms or nurseries telling us who's a good husband or a good mother. Government can't love a child or comfort an ill or aged parent. But we can't ignore the real influence of government in our lives. If a family pays taxes, sends their children to public school, pays into or receives assistance from social security or is involved in any health or human needs program, or has been touched by divorce, adoption or foster care, then government touches that family. Our task is to insure that when government touches our families, it *helps* instead of *hurts* — that it *supports* instead of *undermines*.

The tensions within this Conference were real. Minorities feared they would be excluded and their issues ignored. Racial and ethnic minorities were represented at levels greater than their presence in the population. Their concerns about discrimination, jobs, housing, and respect for cultural differences received broad support from the delegates. The delegates understood that racism and discrimination undermine millions of families.

Some feared that concerns for traditional families would be ignored and their issues would be overwhelmed by professionals in family service. Their voice and votes were heard. A traditional definition of a family was the only definition adopted, and their concerns about recognition for full-time homemakers, the insensitivity of government, the preoccupation of media with sex and violence, and the problems of drug and alcohol abuse became high priorities for the Conference.

In short, no organized interest was able to dominate the Conferences. This obviously disappointed the lobbies of the far right and far left. The majority of delegates were moderates, anxious to avoid the labels, rigid programs and predetermined agendas of ideological activists. With their votes, they sent a very simple message: Families matter. They are the center of our individual lives and the foundation of our common life as a society.

"Yes something good can come out of the White House Conference on Families and I believe it has. Not perfect and not unanimous but basically supportive of families."

Reverend Bob Blumer
South Carolina Delegate

Basic Values

In this report, you will find the recommendations of the delegates. They set forth a new policy toward families in our land; I think that policy reflects several basic shared values.

1. Reality. Their proposals are based on the realities of family life today. They firmly reject the pundits who say families are dying or unimportant. They also reject those who want to ignore the changes and new pressures affecting families. Most families are neither "the Waltons" or some version of a counter-culture commune; policies designed for either one will fail. A family policy must be based on facts, not wishful thinking or overblown projections of change.

2. Confidence. The delegates believe there is enormous strength and vitality in American families. They refuse to be paralyzed by the problems or preoccupied with pathologies. There are enormous resources of strength and self-help within families.

3. Compassion. The delegates recognize that a variety of pressures are undermining families — racism, discrimination, insensitive institutions, economic and social stress. They expect government and other institutions to assist families overwhelmed by these pressures. They reject the notion that government is all good or all bad. They understand that government has a responsibility where other institutions fail or where simple justice demands it.

> **"Our task is to insure that when government touches our families, it *helps* instead of *hurts* — that it *supports* instead of *undermines*."**

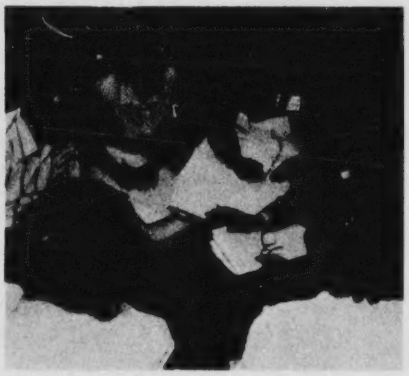
4. Sensitivity. At a minimum, they want government and other major institutions to stop hurting families. They want to remove the biases in policy which work against families in their struggles to cope with today's challenges. They want to replace neglect with an active concern for strengthening families.

5. Pluralism. Delegates understand the regional, racial, ethnic and religious diversity of this country. They support a pluralism which recognizes and appreciates cultural differences. For example, Hispanic families want their extended families and their cultural traditions seen as a real support for families. This respect for differences does not and cannot obscure the shared values which unite families across regional, racial and religious lines.

6. Choice. They want families to choose what's best for them, not resign themselves to choices forced on them by government policy or other pressures. A woman should be able to choose a career in the home or outside the home, based on her needs and the needs of her family, not as a result of economic pressures or a lack of opportunity. A handicapped family member should be free to pursue his or her goals, not limited by patronizing attitudes or policies which reinforce dependence. Likewise, an aging parent should choose a living situation based on personal needs and desires of family, not on the quirks of federal financial incentives.

7. Empowerment. Families must find vehicles to speak out and insure accountability from decision makers. Institutions — whether

media, government and business — need to hear and need their voices.



From Words to Action

There is a lot of talk these days about who is "pro-family." It doesn't matter who captures the name, who gets the headlines or who raises more money. It doesn't matter whose campaign it helps or what organization grows. What really matters is whether policies change, whether decisions take into account what happens to families. If you want to know who is "pro-family," look beyond the rhetoric and ask who is really at work at the crucial proposals made by the delegates to the White House Conference on Families.

We have a real opportunity to change policies affecting families. There's new interest in the media, labor, business and the religious community. Even the competition over families by political interest groups, political parties and candidates reflects an opportunity.

This opportunity could be lost, however, in a denial of the realities of family life today, in a nostalgic search for easy answers, in a sensational focus on the most bizarre and extreme, or a bitter partisan and idological conflict over families. But our success this summer bodes well for this rediscovery of families. The greatest danger is that families could be a passing fad in policy, a new code word for old solutions or shift in rhetoric with no change in policy. That is why our Conference did not end in Los Angeles last July and that is why the President and Congress urged us to set aside a significant, though limited, amount of our budget for a follow up period of implementation and advocacy.

> **"Change will take place because of this conference. We may not know when it will happen, we may not even be able to see it, but it will occur.**
> Joyce Turner, New York Delegate

The next six months can begin, but *only* begin, the task of changing attitudes, policies and practices. This will not be easy:

1. We will have to communicate effectively the results of this Conference and its proposals for action to both decision makers and the general public.

2. We will have to identify structures and strategies both inside and outside government to continue to advocate for change.

3. We will have to challenge business, labor, religious groups, media, foundations, social services and other major institutions to re-examine their policies and practices which ignore or undermine families.

4. We will have to build on American instincts of compassion, self-help and innovation to build new mechanisms to support families.

5. We will have to mobilize American families themselves to speak out against the insensitivity which too often pervades the halls of government and the attitudes of decision-makers.

We will work just as hard to change attitudes and policies as we have worked to gather the views and proposals of so many families.

A Personal Note

This year of listening has been an extraordinary experience for me personally. In my previous eight years in elected office as a prosecuting attorney, state attorney general and member of the U.S. Congress, I cannot remember a single witness coming before a government forum to discuss the impact of a law, rule or case on the strength and stability of families. They talked about the economic, racial, political dimensions of issues, what interest group or region of the country would be affected, but not once about how families would be affected as families. That tells us something of the neglect and ignorance we have to overcome.

I also remember coming out of twelve hours of our WHCF hearings in Nashville, Tennessee after listening to case after case of insensitivity or neglect toward families. I picked up a newspaper and read about a major controversy in Tennessee—how the Tellico Dam project had been halted out of concern for the snail darter, a two-inch-long fish. I thought then how ironic it was that a fish had more rights and respect in government decision making than our families currently have. I hope these personal experiences will be seen as legacies of a bygone era which is giving way to a new commitment to support and strengthen our families. I cannot believe that a humane society which wisely acts, and sometimes sacrifices, to protect the habitat of animal species, will fail to act and make similar sacrifices to protect the natural environment of the human species—our families.

Jim Guy Tucker
Chairperson
White House Conference on Families
Little Rock, Arkansas
September 12, 1980

"Somewhere between the views of the extreme conservatives (who believe government has no business in family matters) and the extreme liberals (who want everything done for the family by the government), we are trying to find as many helpful answers to family problems as possible."
Letter to the editor,
Killdeer (N. Dakota) Herald

II Recommendations and Strategies for Action

Recommendations

How They Developed
How They Ranked
Who Adopted Them

While the Conference format was designed to help delegates develop, refine and choose recommendations, no one could anticipate the outcome. Some predicted only dissension and conflict. Others expected only vague generalities.

To the surprise of many, the delegates reached broad agreement on a wide range of specific proposals to change our nation's laws, policies and programs. Three-fourths of the delegates agreed on three-fourths of the recommendations. Thirty-four proposals were adopted at all three Conferences, effectively dismissing fears about the multi-Conference format fragmenting the national view.

> **"The usefulness of the conference lies not in disagreements over controversial topics, but in agreements on less exciting issues."**
> *Bend (Ore.) Bulletin*

Top Recommendations

The top recommendations adopted at all three Conferences and ranked by percentage of "Yes" votes were these:

1. A call for family-oriented personnel policies — flextime, leave policies, shared and part-time jobs, transfer policies. (92.7%)

2. New efforts to prevent alcohol and drug abuse — education and media initiatives. (92.7%)

3. Major changes in the tax code to eliminate the marriage tax penalty, revise inheritance taxes, and recognize homemakers. (92.1%)

4. Tax policies to encourage home care of aging and handicapped persons. (92.0%)

5. Greater assistance to families with a handicapped member — tax credits, financial help, etc. (91%)

6. A call for systematic analysis of all laws, regulations and rules for their impact on families. (90.4%)

7. Efforts to increase public awareness and sensitivity towards persons with handicapping conditions. (90.1%)

8. Government efforts to assist handicapped persons — enforce existing laws, etc. (89.8%)

9. Encourage independence and home care for aging persons — tax incentives, housing programs. (89%)

10. More equitable economic treatment of full-time homemakers — Social Security changes, programs for displaced homemakers.(87.4%)

11. Reform of Social Security — eliminate biases against families, marriage, homemakers. (84.9%)
12. Increased pressure on media to curb excess violence, sex, stereotypes. (83.4%)
13. Increased efforts to combat employment discrimination. (83%)
14. Support for family violence prevention efforts services. (82%)
15. Involvement of families in improved family support services and self-help efforts. (81.5%)
16. Support for full employment — implement Humphrey-Hawkins Act, job creation efforts. (81.4%)
17. Development of coherent energy and inflation policy. (79.4%)
18. Promote and support a variety of child care choices — home, community and center based care and parental choice. (79%)
19. Improved tax incentives for family housing. (78.3%)
20. Increased efforts to prevent and deal with adolescent pregnancy. (77.9%)

A more complete and detailed ranking of all the Conference recommendations is found on the chart on page 20.

These top recommendations and the others adopted by the delegates parallel quite closely the results of the Gallup Survey on American Families. They wear no ideological blinders. They will please and displease partisans of both the far right and far left. While attacking the evils of alcoholism, drug abuse and pornography, they call for real changes to make our economic life and tax system more fair. While strongly supporting increased child care assistance, they call for new efforts to recognize the social and economic contributions of homemakers. Those whose major concern is political labels will find this White House Conference an enormous frustration.

> **"It was a magnificent experience. I've been recalling the whole diversity of the people I worked with, argued against and listened to. I've gotten this whole new set of insights that will blossom over time."**
> Rabbi Nicholas L. Behrmann, *Baltimore Sun*

Who Were The Delegates?

The 2,000 delegates to the White House Conference on Families came from every state and U.S. territory and every walk of life. Almost 1,600 were chosen at the state level, 310 were appointed at large, 55 were state coordinators, and 40 were members of the WHCF's National Advisory Committee.

Following guidelines adopted by the NAC on September 7, 1979, states nominated delegates through a unique combination of peer selection and gubernatorial selection, with a minimum of 30 percent selected by each method. During state activities, 125,000 persons took part in selecting who would speak for them and what concerns would be addressed.

The 310 at-large delegates were chosen to fill gaps in areas significantly under-represented in state delegations — a process traditionally used by White House Conferences to supplement the delegate makeup. Criteria included adequate representation of racial and ethnic minorities, national organizations, and individuals with demonstrated expertise. The NAC also mandated that not more than half of all the delegates could be professionals in family fields or services.

> **"I asked my son Patrick, 'What makes a family strong?' He said, 'Families that put up the Christmas tree together.'"**
> Kay McGowan, Detroit Hearing

The delegates reflected the diversity of this country to a remarkable degree. The vast majority (more than 70%) were married with children; thirteen percent were single parents. There were more women (60%) than men (40%) and significant numbers of delegates were over 50 years of age (14%) and under 30 (10%). More than a quarter of the delegates came from racial and ethnic minority communities. More than 14% were Black, 7.3% were Hispanic, 2% were Native American and 2% were Asian Americans. More than 10% came from families with incomes under $8,000 a year. One of every twenty delegates (5%) had a handicapping condition. Professionals in family service (40%) were far outnumbered by people who did not earn their living serving families (60%).

How They Developed The Recommendations

The delegates came together in Baltimore, Minneapolis and Los Angeles to face the challenging task of producing a set of comprehensive recommendations in less than three days. They had plenty of raw material to work from — 7 national hearings, 5,000 state recommendations, national organization recommendations, the Gallup Survey results, and their own expertise and experience.

In essence, the process involved the movement of recommendations through three groups of delegates workgroups of 30-40 persons, topic sessions of about 125-175 persons, and plenary meetings of the entire Conference.

Workgroups: Prior to the Conferences, delegates were assigned to one of twenty small groups on the basis of their own preferences. Using recommendations from the state meeting and the experience of their members, the workgroups were responsible for developing three recommendations in a specific area.

Topic Sessions: The four Topic groups, made up of 127-175 persons, met Friday afternoon at each Conference to review and vote on

the recommendations from each of the workgroups in their area, with equal time given each workgroup.

Voting Plenary Session: The voting plenary — final step of the recommendation process — convened Saturday morning, with time equally divided between the four topics. Speakers for and against the recommendations were selected at random. Delegates then voted on the recommendations by written ballot indicating whether they agreed strongly or moderately or disagreed strongly or moderately.

Topics and Issues

- **Families and Economic Well-Being**
  1. Economic Pressures
  2. Families and the Workplace
  3. Tax Policies
  4. Income Security
  5. Status of Homemakers
- **Families: Challenges and Responsibilities**
  6. Preparation for Marriage and Family Life
  7. Specific Supports for Families
  8. Parents and Children
  9. Family Violence
  10. Substance Abuse
  11. Aging and Families
- **Families and Human Needs**
  12. Education
  13. Health
  14. Housing
  15. Child Care
  16. Handicapping Conditions
- **Families and Major Institutions**
  17. Government
  18. Media
  19. Community Institutions
  20. Law

Opening session of WHCF in Baltimore.

How to Use the Materials on the Recommendations

In the pages which follow are summaries of the recommendations which were adopted in each issue area. The summary statements were developed and reviewed by the 115-member Task Force in August. They highlight the major proposals contained in the recommendations adopted by the delegates at the three conferences. They describe points of agreement on recommendations as well as indicate areas of difference among the three Conferences. They make no attempt to reconcile policy differences that appear among recommendations. The complete text of recommendations is found in the full Report.

> **"The delegates seemed determined not to let the more emotional and political issues that dominated many of the state conferences obscure their more critical concerns."**
>
> *The Boston Globe*

Ranking of Recommendations

This chart reflects the level of support for specific proposals across all three Conferences. A recommendation adopted by any of the three Conferences is a Conference recommendation. The vast majority of recommendations passed by margins of more than 3-1.

This ranking process is based on the charts viewed and adopted by the National Task Force. It assumes that recommendations adopted at all three Conferences rank higher than those adopted at two, which rank higher than those adopted at only one. Recommendations adopted by the same number of Conferences are ranked on the basis of the percentage of "yes" votes compared to "no" votes. Where a specific proposal is made in several recommendations, the total yes and no votes are added and the overall percentage is used. In each item ranked, the recommendation number and Conference are listed in abbreviated form (B-Baltimore, M-Minneapolis, L-Los Angeles). Because of the complexities of three groups of delegates adopting different sets of recommendations, this chart can only approximate the priorities of delegates.

"These strong families make a strong nation. Isn't a strong family policy just as important as a strong defense policy?
Sharon Bailey, Denver Hearing

Recommendations Adopted at All Three Conferences

Ranked by Percent of Yes Votes at Conferences

Rank	Subject	Percent Approved
1.	A Call for Family-Oriented Personnel Policies — flextime, better leave policies, shared and part-time jobs, transfer policies. *(B 5; M 4; LA 4)*	92.7
2.	New Efforts to Prevent Alcohol and Drug Abuse — education and media initiatives. *(B 28; M 28; LA 28)*	92.7
3.	Major Changes in Tax Code — eliminate the marriage tax penalty, revise inheritance taxes, recognize homemakers. *(B 8, 15; M 7, 9, 15; LA 8, 9, 13)*	92.1
4.	Tax policies to Encourage Home Care of Aging and Handicapped persons. *(B 33, 15, 32, 46, 48, 33; M 30, 15, 8, 44; LA 31, 9, 47)*	92.0
5.	Greater Assistance to Families with a Handicapped Member — tax credits, financial help, etc. *(B 46; M 44; LA 47)*	91.0
6.	A Call for Systematic Analysis of All Laws, Regulations and Rules for Their Impact on Families. *(B 47; M 45; LA 48)*	90.4
7.	Efforts to Increase Public Awareness and Sensitivity Towards Persons with Handicapping Conditions. *(B 50; M 49; LA 50)*	90.1
8.	Government Efforts to Assist Handicapped Persons — enforce existing laws, etc. *(B 48; M 46; LA 47, 46)*	89.8
9.	Encourage Independence and Home Care for Aging Persons — tax incentives, housing programs. *(B 32; M 30, 32; LA 31, 32)*	89.0
10.	More Equitable Economic Treatment of Full-Time Homemakers — Social Security changes, displaced homemakers programs. *(B 14; M 14; LA 10)*	87.4
11.	Reform of Social Security — eliminate bias toward families, marriage, homemakers. *(B 11, 31; M 31; LA 10)*	84.9
12.	Increased Pressure on Media to Curb Excess Violence, Sex, Stereotypes — grievances, rating system, pornography, FCC actions. *(B 54; M 53, 54; LA 53, 52)*	83.4
13.	Increased Efforts to Combat Employment Discrimination. *(B 3, 5; M 3, 5; LA 1, 5)*	83.0

14. Support for Family Violence Prevention Efforts and Services. *(B 25, 26; M 25; LA 25)* — 82.0

15. Involvement of Families in Improved Support Services and Self Help Efforts. *(B 19; M 19; LA 20)* — 81.5

16. Support for Full Employment — implement Humphrey-Hawkins Act, job creation effort. *(B 1, 4, 12; M 2, 6, 12; LA 6)* — 81.4

17. Development of Coherent Energy and Inflation Policy. *(B 2; M 1; LA 2)* — 79.4

18. Promote and Support a Variety of Child Care Choices — home, community and center based, parental choice. *(B 44; M 42; LA 44, 45)* — 79.0

19. Improved Tax Incentives for Housing. *(B 40, 33; M 40; LA 40)* — 78.3

20. Increased Efforts to Prevent and Deal with Adolescent Pregnancy *(B 23; M 22; LA 23)* — 77.9

21. Increased Child Care Funding. *(B 43; M 42; LA 44)* — 76.6

22. Indexing of Income Taxes. *(B 9; M 8; LA 9)* — 75.7

23. Adequate Welfare Assistance to Families — eliminate provisions which require fathers to leave home, etc. *(B 51; M 10; LA 11)* — 75.6

24. Support for Family Tax Credits — savings plans, etc. *(B 7; M 8; LA 7)* — 75.0

25. Increased Family Life Education *(B 16; M 17, 18; LA 16, 17, 18)* — 74.8

26. Family Services and Special Needs — nuclear, extended, single-parent, military families, etc.) *(B 20; M 21; LA 19, 21)* — 74.6

27. Tax Incentives to Provide Child Care — increased tax credit to parents, new incentives to employers. *(B 7; M 42, 8; LA 43, 7)* — 73.7

28. Increased Housing Subsidies *(B 40; M 40; LA 40)* — 72.8

29. Call for Media Programming More Supportive of Families — less violence, sex, stereotypes. *(B 53; M 52; LA 54)* — 72.1

30. Supports for Families from Private Sector and Religious Community. *(B 20; M 54; LA 57)* — 72.0

31. Improve Fair Housing Laws and Enforcement — no discrimination against families with children, race, creed, sex, etc.) *(B 41; M 39; LA 42)* — 69.7

32. Support Ratification of ERA *(B 49, 6; M 3; LA 49, 5)* — 67.3

33. Increased Community Participation and Use of Community Resources. *(B 49; M 50; LA 51)* — 62.0

34. Improved Parent Child Relations. *(B 24; M 24; LA 24)* — 61.2

Recommendations Adopted at Two Conferences

Rank	Subject	Percent Approved
1.	Positive Recognition of Homemakers. *(B 13; M 13)*	94.2
2.	Tax Incentives for Family-Oriented Work Policies. *(M 4; LA 4)*	91.3
3.	Legal Sensitivity to Families — joint custody, out of home placement, cultural differences, etc. *(B 58; LA 60)*	90.4
4.	Conciliation and Mediation in Family Disputes. *(B 59; LA 59)*	90.0
5.	Call for Family Courts. *(B 60; LA 58)*	89.6
6.	Parent/School Partnership in Education — increased parental involvement. *(B 34; LA 34)*	87.0
7.	Combat Racism and Discrimination. *(B 51; M 56)*	86.0
8.	Treatment Services for Substance Abuse. *(B 29; LA 30)*	83.1
9.	Support for Health Prevention Efforts and National Health Insurance. *(B 38; LA 37)*	82.8
10.	Increased Media Efforts to Combat Substance Abuse. *(M 29; LA 29)*	81.6
11.	Call for Inflation Policies Focused on Food, Health, Housing, Energy. *(B 2; M 1, 11)*	77.6
12.	Support for Family Impact Statements and Commissions. *(B 21; M 20)*	76.0
13.	Improved Licensing and Training in Child Care. *(B 45; M 41)*	76.0
14.	Child Care Incentives for Business — tax credits. *(M 42; LA 43)*	71.9
15.	Support for Family Planning and Choice on Abortion. *(B 39, 49, 56; LA 38)*	64.4

Recommendations Adopted at One Conference

Rank	Subject	Percent Approved
1.	Increased Funding of Substance Abuse Programs. *(B 30)*	93.0
2.	Pass Domestic Violence Act. *(B 27)*	92.0
3.	Improved Neighborhood Preservation Efforts. *(B 42)*	91.0
4.	Comprehensive Health Care. *(B 37)*	91.0
5.	Promote Community Education. *(LA 35)*	88.0
6.	Support of Voluntary Sector. *(LA 55, 22)*	87.0
7.	Awareness of Diversity of Aged. *(LA 33)*	87.0
8.	Increase Liquor Tax and Drinking Age. *(M 27)*	86.0
9.	Encourage Self-Esteem and Respect for Cultural Differences. *(LA 26)*	83.0
10.	Support Equal Educational Opportunity and Bilingual and Bicultural Education. *(B 36)*	81.0
11.	Support for Children. *(LA 56)*	81.0
12.	Increase Educational Funding. *(B 35)*	79.0
13.	End Tobacco Supports and Curb Hazardous Substances. *(LA 39)*	79.0
14.	Promote Legal Equality of Sexes. *(LA 27)*	77.0
15.	Government Provision of Basic Needs. *(B 51)*	72.0
16.	Center for the Study of Prevention of Family Problems. *(B 18)*	71.0
17.	End Restrictive Zoning. *(B 41)*	71.0
18.	Study Positive Family Functioning and Office for Families. *(M 16)*	66.0
19.	Family Farms and Corporate Policies. *(LA 3)*	65.0
20.	Federal Commission on Family Violence. *(M 26)*	64.0
21.	Definition of Family. *(M 52, 50)*	53.0
22.	Oppose Secular Humanism. *(M 53)*	52.0
23.	Support for Choice on Abortion, ERA and Non-Discrimination Efforts. *(B 49)*	50.0

Issues:

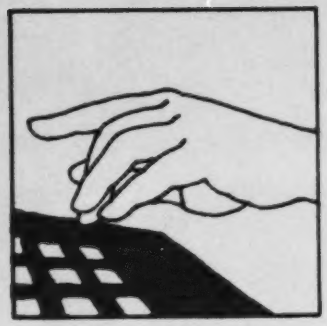
Economic Pressures

Economic pressures on American families were reflected in the recommendations adopted at each Conference on full employment, inflation, and employment discrimination. Compared with other concerns, there was a remarkable degree of consensus on these proposals.

Full Employment: Large majorities of the delegates called for government and private commitment to achieve full employment; to implement the Humphrey-Hawkins Act; to attack joblessness among minorities, women, and youth; and to increase training, career counseling, vocational education, and other services. Delegates at Baltimore and Minneapolis called for support for adequate transportation to connect rural and city people with job markets.

Inflation: More than three-fourths of the delegates voted that special emphasis on inflation be given to the cost of food, health care, energy, and housing. Delegates opposed anti-inflation efforts at the expense of human services and opposed attempting to slow inflation by increasing unemployment. They also called for a coherent energy policy, support of mass transit, a comprehensive national health care program, and lower interest rates to enable families to buy homes and meet other family needs.

Employment Discrimination: All three Conferences called for vigorous enforcement of existing laws concerning affirmative action programs, equal pay for equal work, and called for vigorous efforts to combat sexual harrassment and all forms of discrimination in employment based on race, color, national origin, sex, age, religion and disability. All three Conferences urged federal, state, and local governments to explore ways to define and support equal pay for comparable work. They also called for ratification of the Equal Rights Amendment. In addition, delegates in Baltimore proposed special services to support family enterprises. One Conference urged more stringent enforcement of current anti-trust legislation and improvement of anti-trust laws to control monopolized industries from taking over family businesses and thus relieve pressure on family farms.



Issues:

Families and Work

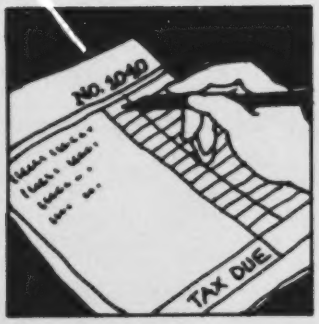
Delegates to the White House Conference on Families were united in strong support of employer personnel policies being made more sensitive and responsive to the needs of family life.

More than 90% of the delegates approved recommendations that creative work arrangements be offered such as flextime, job-sharing programs, flexible leave policies for both sexes, part-time jobs with prorated pay and benefits, and dependent care options, including child care centers.

In Baltimore and Los Angeles the delegates recognized the need for family-oriented personnel policies and called on business, labor and government to join in an effort to establish such policies. The Minneapolis delegates urged industry to initiate these policies, stressed the need for industry to be more concerned about the needs of employees with family responsibilities and called for voluntary overtime. In Minneapolis and Los Angeles, delegates urged that federal, state and local governments provide tax incentives to encourage employers to develop new work policies that are more sensitive and responsive to the needs of employees and their families.

Other issues which touch on work, including employment policy and discrimination, are found in the "Economic Pressures" section.

> **"It's to business's advantage to help the family. Because if they don't work well in the family situation, they aren't going to work well on the job."**
>
> Dick Connors, Vice President, Control Data Corporation, Detroit Hearing



Issues:

Tax Policies

Delegates at all three Conferences supported a wide range of changes in the federal tax code to provide incentives or benefits to assist families. More than 90% of the delegates at each Conference called for elimination of the marriage tax penalty by permitting two earner married couples the option of filing tax returns as single individuals or filing joint tax returns. Another recommendation that received more than 90% delegate support called for tax incentives to families for home care of elderly or disabled family members.

Elimination of the inheritance tax on assets passed to surviving spouses and/or other family members also ranked among the top 10 recommendations in Baltimore and Los Angeles and received at least 90% delegate support at all three Conferences. Eighty-eight percent of the Minneapolis delegates recommended abolishing the federal estate tax of estates valued under one million dollars when these estates are inherited by spouses and/or their children. Delegates further recommended that special consideration be given to the inflated value of farmland.

> **"It is inconsistent to express concern for the family while at the same time imposing a 'marriage tax.' To paraphrase — money speaks louder than words."**
>
> David and Angela Boyter, Washington, D.C. Hearing

Recommendations that passed at all three Conferences, but ranked lower in levels of support, concerned tax deductions for special family savings accounts, expanded Earned Income Tax Credits, a double day care tax credit for an elderly or handicapped dependent, additional exemptions for birth or adoption of a child, and a tax credit for full time homemaking. Also recommended at each Conference were tax incentives for businesses sponsoring child care services and increased child care tax credits for working parents from 20% to 35%.

All three Conferences called for tax incentives to ensure decent, affordable and energy-efficient housing. Delegates expressed their concern about the increasing rate of inflation and its burdensome effect on personal income taxes. At Minneapolis and Los Angeles, more than 90% of the delegates adopted a recommendation calling for indexing of personal income taxes. Baltimore delegates called for tax adjustments to avoid the inflation penalty. In Los Angeles, the delegates urged greater support for the voluntary sector by providing additional tax benefits for volunteer work and charitable contributions.

Issues:

Income Security

At all three Conferences, delegates made specific proposals for changes in the social security system and income maintenance programs. These proposals suggest a variety of ways that these programs can more adequately meet the needs of the program recipients.

Delegates in Baltimore and Minneapolis voted that social security should be reformed to assure an adequate income level or ensure a minimum living standard at least equal to the poverty level. Assuring an adequate income level was also addressed through recommendations related to social security benefits, proposing semi-annual cost of living adjustments, reducing or eliminating limits on earned income, equitable treatment of homemakers, and no income reduction because of marriage.

> **"For many poor families, there is too much month left at the end of the money, leaving them to choose between heating and eating."**
> Richard A. Brown, Seattle Hearing

Recommendations to revise the social security system were also adopted to provide:

- survivor benefits regardless of age and children
- credit for time taken off employment for child rearing
- nondiscriminatory eligibility requirements
- explanation of social security system in the dominant language
- vesting in private pension plans
- widow benefits at age 55
- relaxed disability requirements
- payments to children receiving VA benefits
- equitable allowances for discrepancies in life expectancy
- social security benefits in one's own name rather than as a dependent

All three Conferences urged that income maintenance programs eliminate policies that have a detrimental impact on families. All three Conferences recommended that AFDC be changed to eliminate the disincentive to a father staying in the household; Minneapolis proposed that benefits should be based on need alone and not on categorical distinction such as family compositions. Los Angeles urged that no program include eligibility requirements that are detrimental to the family.

Delegates in Baltimore supported government responsibility for insuring a "guaranteed annual income" and Minneapolis dele-

gates proposed that the federal government finance an income maintenance program at least equal to the poverty level, and provide fiscal relief to the states.

Other recommendations adopted at one of the three Conferences:

- income security programs that interface with federally funded employment, education and training programs
- equality in access to services
- recognition of the different linguistic and cultural perspective of minorities in the delivery and staffing of services
- elimination of mandatory retirement and an increase in employment opportunities for the elderly

66

When I was twelve years old my mother went to work full time because my father became unemployed. The family situation became very tense, very uptight and frustrating. There was little or no time for us kids spent with mom and dad. Often dad brought his frustrations home to us and was easily angry.

Anita Ringo, 15-year-old, Detroit Hearing

99

Issues:

Status of Homemakers

Increased recognition and equity for full time homemakers was a recurrent theme at each of the White House Conferences. Recommendations adopted included major revision of tax and social security policies and other efforts to recognize the contributions of homemakers.

An overwhelming majority of the delegates at all three Conferences supported recommendations changing the tax code in the following ways:

- Eliminate state and federal inheritance taxes for spouses
- Allow tax credits for homemakers who are providing primary care for handicapped and elderly family members in the home

Los Angeles delegates recommended the elimination of state and federal inheritance, estate and gift taxes for spouses and survivors to facilitate continuing operation of family businesses and farms. Minneapolis and Los Angeles delegates also supported revising the tax code to allow additional tax credits or tax exemptions for full time homemakers. Baltimore recommended additional tax exemptions for homemakers caring for their own pre-school children.

A large majority of the delegates at the Baltimore and Minneapolis White House Conferences favored:

- Equal sharing of the economic resources earned during the life of a marriage, including social security benefits
- A comprehensive system of support services to displaced homemakers, including job counseling and training, job placement, etc.
- Classification and upgrading of homemaking as a career by Department of Labor

The Baltimore Conference recommended that government recognize homemakers by instituting a National Homemakers Week.

> **"I speak of the group that may become an endangered species. I speak of the housewife . . . While technological advancements have transformed housework to the microwave level, our knowledge base concerning housewives is still at the wringer/ washer stage."**
>
> Alfreda Iglehart,
> Oak Park, Michigan Hearing

Challenges and Responsibilities

Issues:

Preparation for Marriage and Family Life

The need for increased family life education was strongly affirmed in the conference. A majority of delegates at Baltimore (82%), Minneapolis (62%) and Los Angeles (73%), adopted recommendations in support of "comprehensive family life education for children, youth and adults." At all three Conferences delegates agreed that family life education was vitally needed; that federal, state and local governments should assist the public and private sectors by providing courses and programs to be planned, implemented and evaluated by parents, youth, community and religious representatives and professionals. Such courses and programs should include but not be limited to: human development; marriage and the family; parenting education and child care skills; interpersonal relationships, communication and decisionmaking; human sexuality.

Delegates at all three Conferences also called for training or certification procedures for course leaders, and also supported the development of bilingual, multicultural, and ethnically relevant courses. The right of parents to excuse a child from "participating in any objectionable sections" of family life education in the public schools was endorsed by delegates in Los Angeles as was the principle that primary responsibility for teaching family life lies with parents.

- Baltimore delegates recommended the establishment of a "publicly supported" center to study prevention, and serve as a clearinghouse for, and to inform the public about, family conflict (e.g., child abuse, spouse abuse, neglect, emotional disturbance). In addition, they stressed the necessity of funding preventive approaches as a means of decreasing the need for costly treatment and rehabilitative services.
- Minneapolis delegates favored more study of positive family functioning by both public and private institutions. They also recommended that the Office on Families coordinate and publicize efforts of this kind.
- Los Angeles favored requiring marriage preparation, human growth and development, responsible parenthood, effective communication, management of resources and skills necessary to produce them, and making available family counseling.

Issues:

Specific Support for Families

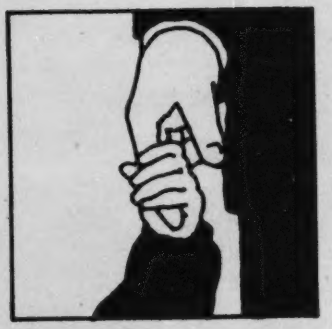
All three White House Conferences called for more cooperation between public and private sectors to support families. In virtually identical recommendations they urged that:

- programs should involve families themselves in the provision of services
- federal efforts should be linked to community based and voluntary organizations
- greater use of volunteers and family self-help programs should be encouraged
- services for the entire family, as well as the individual, should be provided

Each Conference also emphasized the unique needs and strengths of families from different cultural, linguistic, ethnic, economic and religious backgrounds, as well as the needs of single parents, migrants and military families. The Conferences in both Los Angeles and Baltimore emphasized support of extended families as strength for society. Delegates at Minneapolis and Los Angeles encouraged that advisory committees, including consumers, be utilized in the planning and provision of services to families.

Delegates at the Conferences in both Baltimore and Minneapolis encouraged every private and public agency to include family impact statements in policies and proposed legislation, and to establish local commissions to insure more sensitive policies toward families.

> **"We believe ... in the greatness of America, but our government has by-passed the family and gone straight to the individual. Individuals come from families. They are nurtured there. They're grown there. And we've got to make the ground fertile again."**
>
> Robert and Mary Jane Morgan, Seattle Hearing



Issues:

Parents and Children

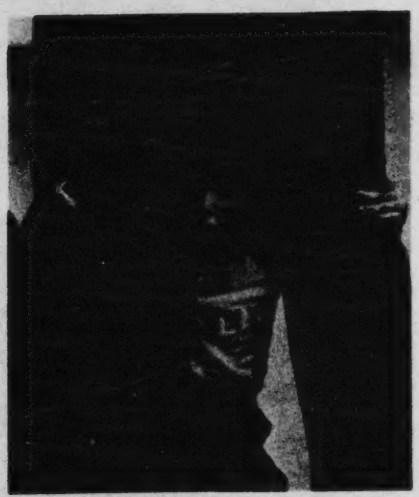
Delegates at all three White House Conferences adopted recommendations dealing with adolescent pregnancy, foster care and adoption and parent-child relationships.

All three Conferences made recommendations relating to the crisis of adolescent pregnancies and for prevention to receive high priority. Baltimore and Minneapolis recommended that male and female adolescents and their families should have access to comprehensive health, education (including family life education), and social services. These services may be provided by parents, religious institutions, and/or public and private agencies. Los Angeles delegates stressed that the most effective means of prevention is the influence of positive peer group values.

> **"Families are important, but they come in all sizes, and shapes, and colors."**
> Helen Fisher, Alaska State Hearing

The delegates at the Baltimore and Minneapolis Conferences recommended that pregnant adolescents, adolescent parents and their families should have access to comprehensive services that will help them overcome the problems associated with early pregnancy and teenage parenthood.

In the area of foster care and adoption, each Conference reaffirmed the right of the child to a stable, permanent home. In Baltimore, the delegates, by an overwhelming majority (93%), strongly endorsed H.R. 3434 and called upon the President to enact it into law.* Specific changes in the foster care system were supported by 71% of the delegates in Minneapolis. These changes include:



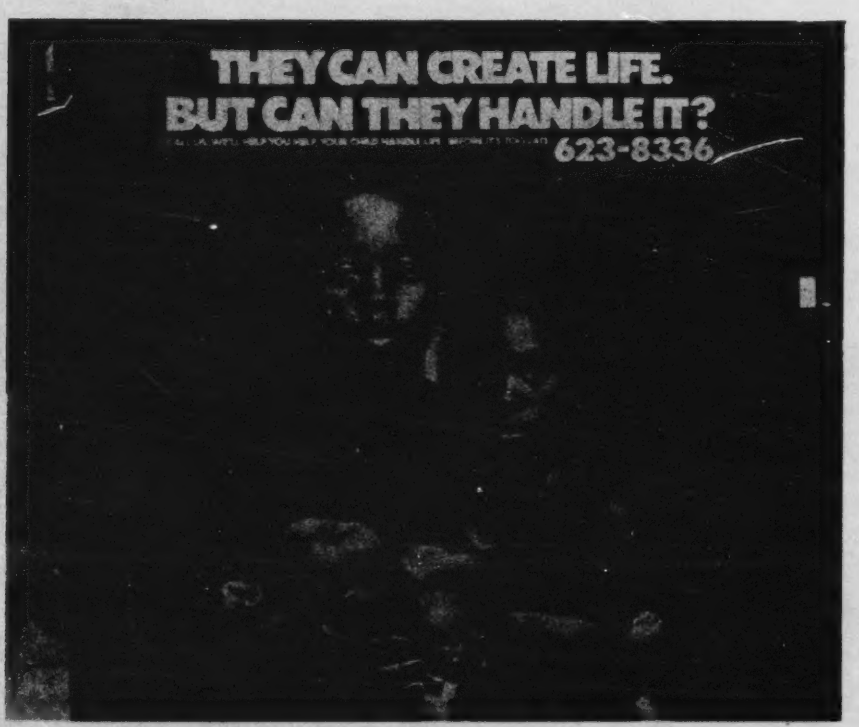
- case review every six months by agency of jurisdiction and local citizen review board
- preventive services to decrease possibility of out-of-home placement in foster care
- adoption subsidies for placing children with special needs
- termination of parental rights legislation
- implementation of the Indian Child Welfare Act

A large majority (86%) of the Los Angeles delegates urged government to encourage alternative services for children, utilizing the private sector as well as public services.

Conference recommendations on parent-child relations all focused on strengthening the parent-child relationship. Baltimore

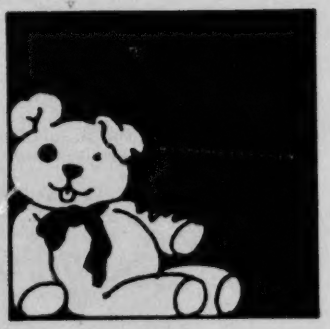
*This legislation was signed into law in mid-June, 1980.

delegates (57%) recommended that parents not be excluded from making decisions which affect minor children's participation in programs unless the interest and rights of the child are at risk. Minneapolis delegates recognized that parents should assume the primary responsibility for teaching their children the basic moral values and responsible conduct. But Minneapolis also recognized the right of all children to equal protection of the law under the Constitution of the United States, and that this right may supersede the rights of parents to notification about a minor child's participation in private or government social service programs. In Los Angeles, 77% of the delegates urged that government utilize the inherent strengths of extended families, neighborhood, religious affiliations and other informal aspects of cultural, linguistic, ethnic, and religious diversity of families in planning and funding services.



"These are some of the things that our fourth grade class thought were important family problems. Here is a list of the problems we discussed. One of the problems is divorce. Divorce is very hard for the child for many reasons. They have to learn to cope with the new situation and sometimes they have to choose which parent to live with. That's hard. Another thing that is hard is hunger. Many children in the U.S. go through many days without any food. Parents who lose their jobs don't have enough money to pay for the proper foods. Drugs, smoking and drinking are also bad for children. When parents fight, they sometimes treat the children badly. Loneliness also is difficult for children. Some children are alone many hours a day. Some children's parents are in jail or prison. This can be a serious problem. Children must often learn to accept the illness or death of a parent. We hope you will discuss these problems at your meeting and find some ways to help children."

Letter to the WHCF from a 4th Grade Class



Issues:

Family Violence

A majority of the delegates at each Conference adopted recommendations about violence within families, emphasizing the need for government leadership in understanding the causes of family violence and in enacting and funding protective legislation, strengthening current programs, and strictly enforcing existing laws to alleviate and prevent family violence. They referred to the proposed 1980 Domestic Violence Prevention and Services Act and the 1974 Child Abuse Act. The recommendations also spelled out the need for coordinated, family-oriented, multi-cultural, 24-hour comprehensive treatment services, with greater cooperation between community groups, churches and government agencies.

In addition, all three Conferences stressed the need for increased public awareness of family crises either through media campaigns, community awareness education, and family life education starting in the earliest grades. The Minneapolis Conference proposed a Presidential Commission to explore the problem, recommend courses of action and educate the public.

The majority of the delegates recommended that rehabilitation services for both the victim and perpetrator of family violence be encouraged and provided.

The Los Angeles delegates emphasized, as a preventive measure, the need to enhance self-esteem and to develop policies that are sensitive to cultural differences.

Finally, the Los Angeles delegates adopted a recommendation calling for legal and social equality of the sexes as a means of preventing spouse abuse.

> **"In October of this year a women with six children called us who needed emergency shelter... we were forced to tell her that there was no space available for her. One week later she was on the critical list at the Hartford Hospital because of the severity of her husband's beating."**
>
> Ellen Curley, Hartford Hearing

Issues:

Substance Abuse

Delegates at all three White House Conferences on Families expressed their deep concerns about drug and alcohol abuse by overwhelming votes for recommendations dealing with education of youth, involvement of total family in prevention and treatment, and media responsibility in addressing the harmful effects of substance abuse.

At two Conferences, delegates expressed the need for training qualified personnel (including physicians and other health personnel), for government assistance in developing community-based comprehensive treatment programs, for employment training, and for the accessibility of treatment to all persons with consideration for their language and culture.

Minneapolis delegates proposed a 2% increase in alcohol taxes to fund local treatment programs, a raise in the legal drinking age to 21, and placement of warning labels on alcohol containers.

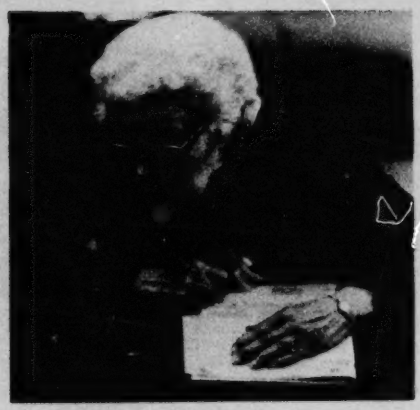
Delegates in Baltimore warned against budget cuts in attacking alcohol, drug and nicotine abuse, "our number one health problem." They also stressed the need for program accountability as well as client follow-up.

Those delegates also recommended that we should help children discover their gifts, talents and abilities, and cultivate these through a strong, loving family in order to raise the children's self-esteem and thus help to prevent substance abuse.

> **"I happen to be a recovering alcoholic. I come from an alcoholic family that has already dealt with alcoholism. My grandmother is an alcoholic. My father, alcoholic. My oldest brother, alcoholic. My sister, although she does not drink, married to an alcoholic."**
>
> A participant at the Detroit Hearing

Issues:

Aging



Conference recommendations on aging urged that the individuality of elderly persons be recognized and that they have as broad a range of voluntary choices of living arrangements as possible and feasible for them. This effort called for a variety of supports for them to live in their own homes, in their adult children's homes, as well as in institutional settings. To that end, recommendations on tax policies, services to the elderly person and alternatives to institutionalization were adopted at all three White House Conferences.

In relation to tax policies, all three Conferences strongly or overwhelmingly urged tax incentives to households with elderly members. Two Conferences recommended tax incentives for housing modifications to accommodate older persons; in Baltimore, tax benefits for homemaker services were supported.

Delegates to all three Conferences recognized the need for a variety of options in living arrangements for elderly persons, with special emphasis on enabling elderly persons to remain at home. They urged support for day care, respite care, changes in Medicare and Medicaid policies and other community-based services. Minneapolis delegates recognized a need for younger families caring for elders as well as elders themselves to have services directed to determining and implementing these living arrangements.

> **"The same dollars that help one person in a nursing home could help three people living at home."**
> Mary Opray, Oregon Delegate

Two Conferences, Baltimore and Minneapolis, adopted recommendations urging reforms of the social security system, including assuring an adequate income level, reducing or eliminating limitations on earned income, semi-annual cost of living adjustments, no reduction in payment because of marriage, immediate vesting in private plans, and multi-language explanations of the system.

Baltimore and Minneapolis each adopted recommendations on housing, one urging funding to help elderly persons maintain their homes and the other providing for adequate housing for rural elderly persons. By a large majority, Los Angeles urged that government programs for the aged reflect an awareness of the cultural, linguistic, ethnic, religious, sexual, geographical, health, dietary, economic, and other differences among the aged population.

Issues:

Education

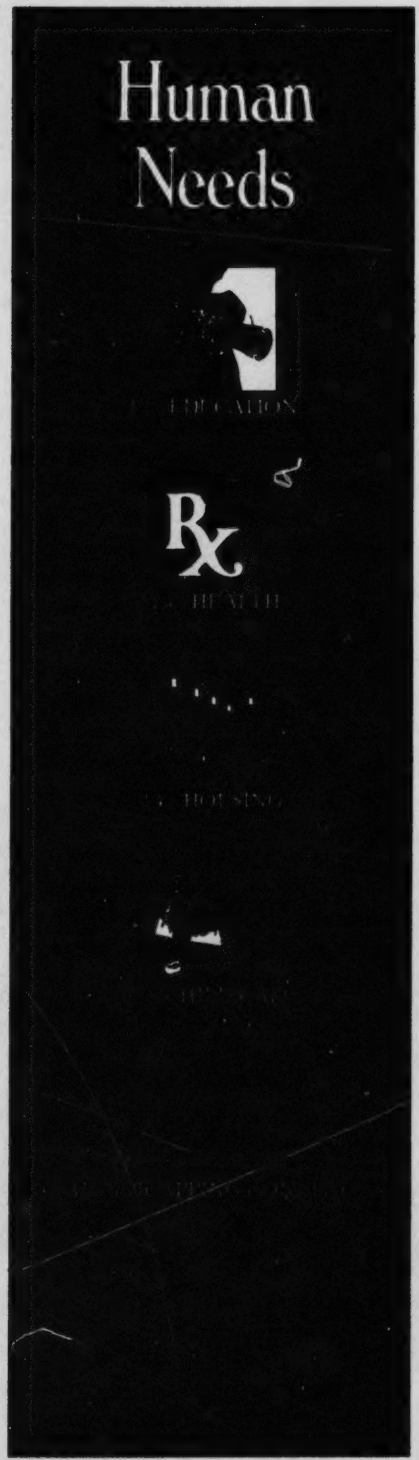
Education was the number one recommendation in Los Angeles, where 95% of the delegates voted for a partnership between parents and school to ensure quality education for each student. Similarly in Minneapolis, with 80% support, the delegates acknowledged that education goals were to be a shared responsibility with parent involvement in the development of all educational policies. At both Conferences, the delegates also recommended that community advisory councils be established.

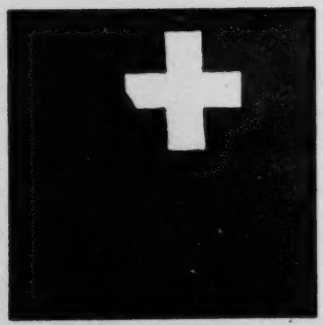
In Baltimore, there was 90% delegate support for priority attention to family life education, with a program focus on parenting, communication, and life skills at all levels of education. These programs should be holistic, recognizing ethnic and personal dimensions and respecting all sectarian positions.

In Los Angeles, the delegates identified Community Education as a major resource for families and communities to help themselves and each other.

In Baltimore, more than 80% of the delegates agreed public education must be maintained. The federal and state governments should work to secure equal educational opportunity for every child with special emphasis on the importance of bi-cultural and bi-lingual programs.

A further Baltimore recommendation called for increased appropriations for current federal education programs, with priority for increasing state and local funding and standards for sex equitable education.





Issues:

Health

The focus of the health care delivery system should be on prevention and wellness orientation. Education, early intervention, counseling, screening and outreach were emphasized in recommendations in both Los Angeles and Baltimore. The Baltimore Conference also recommended accessible comprehensive health care for all segments of the community. Third party payments, tax credits and other government subsidies should cover all such services. More than 90% of the delegates in Baltimore emphasized that health care for families in rural and urban communities should be made more accessible through reduction of the barriers of cost, geography and cultural differences. Discrepancy in health status between the minority and general populations must be eliminated.

> **"It's been tough. We don't have health insurance for the family, so we can't afford to get sick."**
> Virginia Gersham, Kansas Hearing

Delegates voting in Baltimore (65%) and Los Angeles (62%) called for a full range of family planning services to all persons including pre- and postnatal care and safe, legal abortions.

A Los Angeles recommendation urged the government to discontinue subsidy of the tobacco industry as well as its support of corporations which sell or distribute illegal drugs or hazardous substances and medical devices to other countries.

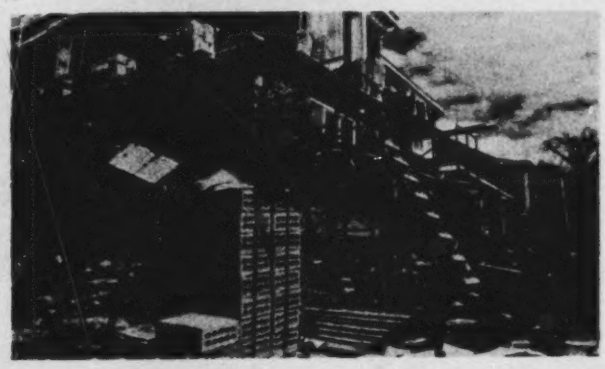
Issues:

Housing

Delegates at each of the White House Conferences adopted proposals calling for affordable family housing and programs to end housing discrimination. Among other approaches to meeting housing needs, the delegates called for tax incentives, subsidies, and reduced interest rates. They called for strict enforcement of current laws and passage of new legislation to outlaw discrimination against families with children, against minorities, single persons, and because of age and other characteristics including handicapping conditions, sexual preference, and blood and legal relationships. This discrimination also should be prohibited by all local and federal housing and financing programs, except those projects exclusively directed to provide housing for elderly persons. The Minneapolis proposal urged priority action on migrant, Indian, rural and low income housing in ghettos and barrios.

Minneapolis and Los Angeles called for an end to restrictive zoning practices. Minneapolis urged an overhaul of federal housing programs to produce more units and called for an end to practices which restrict the supply of housing and fair access to housing, such as red lining. Baltimore delegates (90%) emphasized the preservation of a sense of neighborhood through efforts to increase home ownership, develop effective housing code enforcement and avoid displacement of families. Each Conference urged more effective programs of housing maintenance or code enforcement.

> **"Excluding a family simply because some of its members are children, is no less discriminating than excluding a family on the basis of race, religion, or national origin."**
> Thomas Hagerty, Hartford Hearing



Issues:

Child Care

Support for child care recommendations was consistent at all three Conferences, with agreement on the need for alternative forms of quality child care, the need for full parental choices among a variety of child care options, and for expanded funding for programs.

In urging support for alternative forms of quality child care, delegates in Baltimore and Minneapolis stressed the importance of family and parental involvement in child care programs. Delegates in Baltimore and Minneapolis supported quality licensing standards and their enforcement, as well as training and appropriate compensation for child care personnel.

Increased public funding for child care was supported at all three Conferences, with Baltimore and Minneapolis stressing the need for private industry and government at all levels to expand current funding. Los Angeles stressed subsidized care so parents at all income levels have access to quality care. Baltimore also recommended the use of day care as a strategy to avoid out-of-home placement.

Two Conferences, Los Angeles and Minneapolis, passed recommendations dealing with tax incentives. Both urged the adoption of incentives for businesses which sponsor child care, and expanding the present child care deduction or credit.

> **"The young members of our union are frantically seeking in all directions solutions for a safe place to keep their children while they are at work. At the present time, they find nothing but patchwork arrangements and confusion in the availability of day care programs."**
>
> Berkley Watterson, United Auto Workers, Detroit Hearing

Issues:

Handicapping Conditions

All three Conferences overwhelmingly supported recommendations concerning families affected by handicapping conditions. Three of the top five recommendations in Los Angeles concerning handicapping conditions were supported by an average of 93 percent of the delegates. All three Conferences supported the use of media, education, training and counseling, and self-help groups to promote positive attitudes and achieve total integration of those with handicapping conditions.

Public and private assistance to families to encourage independent living for handicapped persons received significant support at all three sites. Delegates proposed the use of tax credits to encourage home care; availability of financial assistance for special equipment and other needs; and employment opportunities to promote self support. Additionally, delegates in Baltimore and Minneapolis supported full implementation and funding of existing laws and programs related to handicapping conditions. Los Angeles adopted a similar recommendation, but suggested attention to transportation, housing, education, and income maintenance as well as subsidized adoption of hard-to-place children.

Delegates also proposed that the government take specific policy, legislative, and program action to implement current laws with focus on: tax credits for families; social services, such as day care and respite care; elimination of discrimination; and the promotion of fair access, independence and equal opportunities for handicapped individuals and their families.

> **"It may surprise you, but it does not suprise too many blind people that my occupation is that of a sculptor. Most people consider that impossible. I consider that their problem."**
> Steve Handschu, Detroit Hearing

Major Institutions

Issues:

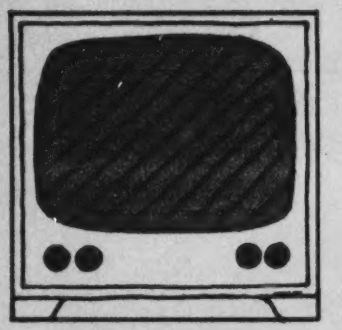
Government

Government insensitivity to families was a dominant concern at the White House Conference on Families. In Minneapolis, the number one recommendation said "many government policies are anti-family" and called for "laws and regulations to be analyzed in terms of their impact on families." An identical recommendation passed by a margin of 459 to 34 in Los Angeles, and a similar recommendation received strong support in Baltimore. In addition, delegates in Baltimore and Minneapolis called for "family impact statements" by every private and public agency and for voluntary independent commissions at all levels of government to ensure greater sensitivity to the social, economic and racial diversity of families and to be accountable to their special needs.

Family was defined as "two or more persons related by blood, heterosexual marriage, adoption or extended families," by 53% of the Minneapolis delegates.

Increased government recognition of community institutions and increased citizen participation were supported by all three Conferences. Elimination of racism and other forms of discrimination ranked second among all recommendations in Minneapolis. In addition, Baltimore delegates recommended that government help families to function by guaranteeing basic human needs such as health care, jobs, housing and education.

A majority of delegates at all three Conferences supported ratification of the proposed Equal Rights Amendment. In Baltimore and Los Angeles, delegates specifically called on the White House and states "to do everything possible to ensure ratification of ERA."



Issues:

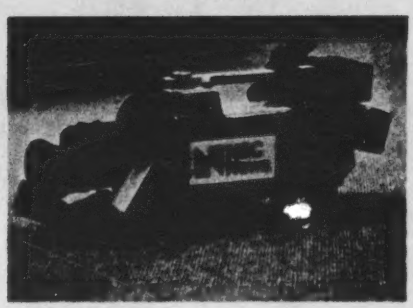
Media

Delegates to all three White House Conferences demonstrated their strong concerns about the influence of media, particularly television, on American families. By large majorities they called for greater regulation by the Federal Communications Commission; more community consultation by television stations; and less emphasis on violence, pornography, crime, stereotypes, drugs, and alcohol. All three Conferences criticized violence in media and other programming which has negative effects on families.

Delegates in Baltimore called on the FCC to establish regional grievance mechanisms. Minneapolis delegates urged the FCC to require a station to evaluate its impact on moral standards and family values. Both Conferences called for community advisory boards to be part of the licensing process. They urged that membership on advisory boards and commissions should reflect cultural and ethnic diversity in order to increase the positive visibility of minorities. Ninety-three percent of the delegates in Minneapolis called for the television industry to develop a rating system for family viewing. Two-thirds of the delegates in Los Angeles urged TV networks to offer less sensationalism and provide more programs emphasizing morality and positive family relationships; they also recommended more authority be given to the FCC to impose more rigorous standards on networks if self-monitoring fails after 12 months. Obscenity and child sex exploitation were condemned by the Los Angeles delegates, who also recommended strict enforcement of the Protection of Children Against Sexual Exploitation Act of 1977.

By large majorities, delegates in Baltimore and Los Angeles opposed stereotypes in programming. All three Conferences urged greater media responsibility in dealing with drugs and alcohol. The third highest recommendation in Los Angeles dealt with the media's role in promoting and understanding and awareness of disabled persons.

> **"Television has become another member of the family. We eat meals near it, we learn from it, we spend more time with it than any single individual. Television is central in our children's lives, as a tutor, babysitter, teacher, entertainer and salesperson all rolled into one."**
>
> Ms. Clara Fisher, Kansas Hearing



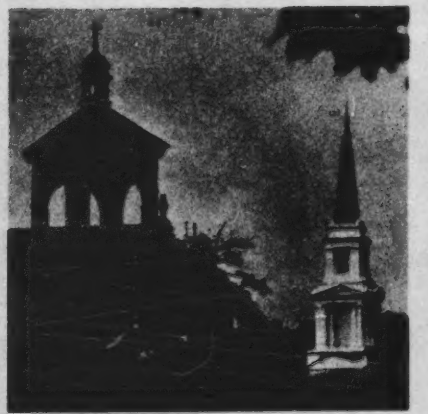
Issues:

Community Institutions

Delegates to the White House Conferences recognized community and religious organizations as important supports for families. A large majority at each Conference called for greater involvement of community groups and religious organizations in planning and providing services to assist families. At the Baltimore and Los Angeles Conferences, specific encouragement of self-help groups was contained in recommendations which passed overwhelmingly. The Los Angeles Conference recommended that community organizations, religious institutions, and other voluntary associations cooperate with governmental entities in order to strengthen the informal support relationships which enable families to help themselves. Citizen participation and self-reliance among families were encouraged at the Baltimore and Minneapolis Conferences. Minneapolis delegates explicitly called for more activity by religious institutions in family life education and in advocacy for just and nondiscriminatory public policies. They also decried secular humanism in public institutions.

Both the Baltimore and Minneapolis Conferences called for attacks on racism and discrimination. Two recommendations were strongly endorsed in Los Angeles to strengthen the voluntary sector by providing additional tax benefits for volunteer activity and contributions, as well as "purchase of service" contracts with local nonprofit organizations. In Baltimore, delegates called on community institutions to support families' choice to have children through support for leave policies and child care, as well as legal, medical and family planning services.

> **"The time has come to approach family problems in innovative ways that draw on the strengths of individuals and local community institutions, instead of calling for more government spending and more government interference in our lives."**
>
> Elaine Donnelly,
> Oak Park, Michigan Hearing



Issues:

Law and the Judicial System

Delegates to the White House Conferences in Baltimore and Los Angeles called for greater use of conciliation and mediation services in family disputes, a system of specialty Family Courts and greater efforts to avoid out-of-home placement of children.

By votes of 91% to 90% respectively, Baltimore and Los Angeles delegates recommended the use of arbitration and mediation as alternatives to the traditional adversary system of resolving marital disputes. Their recommendations include:

- Availability of court connected conciliation and mediation services in all states and territories
- Sensitivity to cultural differences
- Encouragement of self-determination
- Support for joint custody

In addition, Baltimore delegates recommended that states explicitly consider how laws impact on family preservation, while Los Angeles delegates recommended increased divorce filing fees to fund conciliation and mediation services.

Family courts that would deal only with legal matters affecting families were called for by 89% of the delegates in Baltimore and 90% of those in Los Angeles. Both also recommended continuing legal education and greater cultural sensitivity for judges and other family law professionals. Baltimore delegates called for establishment of community advisory groups consisting of parents, public and private service providers, religious interest groups and elected officials to assist courts in determining the impact of their policies on family and community life.

Delegates, by votes of 92% in Baltimore and 88% in Los Angeles, made recommendations that courts minimize the disruption of families and take into account cultural and ethnic needs. They recommended that out-of-home placement of children be considered as an act of last resort and that the least restrictive placement be used to ensure the best interests of the child. Additionally, Baltimore delegates recommended removal of status offenders from the court structure and assurance of due process protection for children.

> **"The emotional restructuring of a family can be negotiated but it cannot be adjudicated. What the American family needs in the decade of the 80s is a structure to handle domestic disputes in a conciliatory format."**
> Lester L. Carney, Seattle Hearing

Special Concerns

Minority Reports
Voting Analysis

The overall results of the Conference point to areas of consensus and identify issues which cross racial, regional and ideological lines. The Conference also reflected the very real diversity of this country. Within the larger consensus, it is important to analyze how different groups viewed the recommendations and how their priorities may have differed from the groups as a whole. And it is helpful to know where consensus did not exist.

Sources

This analysis of how diverse groups viewed the recommendations is drawn from two basic resources: minority reports filed by 50 delegates and voting analyses. At each Conference, delegates could anonymously indicate age, race, and sex on their ballots. At each of the Conferences a significant number chose not to take this opportunity. However, an analysis of the top twenty recommendations of those who chose to respond provides interesting insights into priorities of various groups.

> **"The people were so diverse. In one of my workgroups there was a Jewish grandmother from Syracuse, New York, me — a Southern Baptist from Brookhaven — and a Catholic priest from Gary, Indiana."**
> Mrs. Pat Allen, At-Large Delegate

Delegates Were Diverse

This Conference was diverse and included strong representation of minority communities. In fact, more than 515 delegates, or more than one-fourth of the total, were minority persons.

In addition, the Conference had significant representation of low-income families. More than 10 percent had family incomes of less than $8,000.

One out of every eight delegates was over 50 and one out of every 10 was under 30. In addition the Conference delegates included significant numbers of single parents, handicapped persons, and others with unique challenges.

Racial and Ethnic Minorities

For racial and ethnic minorities, families have been a source of strength and support over decades of discrimination and racism. Extended families in particular have provided a haven and buffer against the forces of prejudice and poverty. These difficult challenges have produced unique strengths and needs, which were reflected in the White House Conference on Families.

Minority Delegates

- **290 (14.3%) were Black**
- **146 (7.3%) were Hispanic**
- **44 (2.2%) were Native Americans**
- **35(1.8%) were Asian Americans or Pacific Islanders**

Black Delegates

As a group, Black delegates gave strong and consistent support to recommendations directing attention to major economic issues. At Baltimore, for example, 11 of the top 12 proposals approved by Black delegates reflected the intense concern within the Black community for improvement in the national economy. Full employment and more sensitive personnel policies ranked highest among the 11 proposals. Similarly, 10 of the top 20 recommendations approved by Black delegates in Minneapolis called attention to the economic pressures felt by many of their families. In Los Angeles, full employment was ranked second, while equal pay for comparable work, fair employment practices and support for ERA were also among the top 10.

Black delegates also placed priority on recommendations dealing with substance abuse, comprehensive health care, family violence, handicapped persons, housing discrimination and social services. Minority reports submitted by Black delegates stressed overcoming racist practices in government research practices and concerns about media programming.

> **"Any meaningful White House Conference must address the double jeopardy of racism and poverty as a fundamental problem facing Black families."**
> Ann Ford, Tennessee Hearing

Hispanic Delegates

The priority recommendations for Hispanic delegates at all three Conferences stressed the need for sensitive support services: bilingual/bicultural education, family support services, services for the elderly, services for the disabled, and family violence prevention. In Los Angeles, two specific Hispanic concerns were revealed in support for the recommendation on parental involvement in educational policy (3rd) and recognition of ethnic and cultural diversity (8th). The need to combat substance abuse ranked in the top five proposals adopted by the Hispanic delegates at the Baltimore and Minneapolis Conferences.

Minority reports on Hispanic concerns were submitted at each

> **"There are many things the anglos could learn from us. Hispanic families have a very strong support system for their members. They seek out help first from the family, and family members will often drop what they are doing to help each other."**
> Guadalupe Gibson, WHCF Deputy Chair

of the three Conferences. They called for bilingual/bicultural education, better housing, and sensitivity to Hispanics in social services. They also stressed greater sensitivity in health services, employment of Hispanics, and support for the extended family.

> **"Native Americans are affected by government from the day they are born. I was born with a federal pacifier in my mouth."**
> Jean Raymond, Seattle Hearing

Native American Delegates

Recognition of cultural and ethnic diversity, and parental involvement in educational policy were strongly supported by Native Americans in Los Angeles. In Baltimore, recommendations on substance abuse, family support services, foster care reform, multicultural education and family violence ranked very high among Native Americans. In Minneapolis, Native American delegates consistently supported proposals opposing abortion, reflecting concern with the media, calling for increased parental involvement in education and health programs and providing support for disabled persons. In Los Angeles, they gave strongest support to family impact analysis, family courts, and family-oriented personnel policies. Minority reports submitted on Native American issues included concerns over tribal rights, funding of the Indian Child Welfare Act, and penalties for those who threaten Indian lands.

> **"But when they come to the states what they learn in the family and what they learn in school, with the counselor, or the teacher, or what they learn from friends or T.V. is different from what they learn at home. So the child becomes confused..."**
> Quynh Tnguyen, Seattle Hearing

Asian-American Delegates

The Asian-American delegates to the Los Angeles and Minneapolis Conferences emphasized economic issues. They expressed concerns related to full employment, family-oriented personnel policies, employment discrimination, and the inequities of the marriage and inheritance taxes. The Asian-American delegates in Baltimore favored support of the education recommendations, including multiethnic, multicultural education, and funding for education. They

also strongly supported recommendations regarding child care needs and the special needs of the handicapped and their families.

In general, minority reports submitted by Asian delegates called for multicultural and multilingual services and education, equal employment, affirmative action, and special programs for the elderly and immigrants, among other priorities.

> **"Did pro-life, pro-family people waste their time going to the WHCF? Should we have walked out? The answer to both questions is no. Sixty recommendations were considered by the conference; four were passed that we strongly opposed. Fifty-six recommendations were passed that should, if implemented, help and be supportive of the American Family. Our presence there was important."**
>
> Evelyn Aquilla, New York Delegate

Other Special Concerns:

Ninety-one reports were submitted as delegates sought to voice sentiments that they believed had not been adequately expressed in the Conference recommendations. Delegates used them to express disagreement, to expand on recommendations, to cover issues not dealt with in the recommendations, and to lay out a program or a set of concerns for a particular constituency. While minority reports covered many issues, there were several areas that drew minority reports at each Conference.

Many other reports were submitted on subjects including energy, inflation, anti-family features of welfare, child support, education, military families, homemakers, social security changes, joblessness, D.C. Voting Rights, the Laxalt Family Protection Act, and many others. They are summarized in the section which follows.

In addition to voting and submitting minority reports, delegates used the speak-out sessions as forums to express their views. A well-organized "pro-family" faction carried out brief demonstrations —a walk-out in Baltimore, a caucus in Minneapolis and a symbolic destruction of one of their four ballots in Los Angeles to dramatize their concerns about the process and substance of the Conference. A variety of other groups also held caucuses and press conferences to call attention to their views.

> **"The strength and, perhaps, the survival of the family depends to no small extent on economic matters, in a word—jobs. And that means equal opportunity for all Americans, including Blacks, Hispanics, and other minorities and women."**
>
> Paul Pastor, Stamford Hearing

Minority Report Concerns

Racial and Ethnic Concerns: Twelve reports were submitted dealing with the specific concerns of Hispanic, Black, Native American, and Asian constituencies. They all stressed the need for recognition of cultural diversity and adequate representation of minorities in decision-making.

Anti-Abortion: Seven minority reports opposed abortion and called for a constitutional amendment to prohibit abortion or an end to government support for abortion.

Sex Education: Six reports either stressed the need for sex education at home or greater parental involvement in sex education efforts.

Youth Concerns: Several reports were submitted by youth delegates who opposed a draft; urged greater representation of young people on all boards, commissions and decision-making bodies; supported ERA and called for availability of contraceptives without parental consent.

Health Care: Five reports dealt with the need for comprehensive health care, better access for rural and underserved areas, and preventive health efforts.

Handicapping Conditions: Five reports expanded on the many recommendations dealing with issues affecting handicapped persons. They called for more discussion of such issues, support for self-help groups and career education, and advocacy and education on handicapped issues.

Non-Public Schools: One report at each Conference called for tax and other assistance for parents whose children attend non-public schools.

Definition of Family: Three reports called for family to be defined as "two or more persons related by blood, marriage or adoption."

Gay Rights: Three reports urged an end to discrimination against homosexuals.

Media: Two reports called for greater regulation of media and one opposed such action.

Child Care: Three reports supported increased effort to make quality child care available through incentives to business and tax benefits for parents.

A complete listing of minority reports is found in the full Report.

Implementation and Advocacy:

Recommendations to Reality

It is one task to generate an agenda of recommendations to strengthen American families. It is quite another to effectively advocate those proposals where decisions are made. Fortunately, from its inception the White House Conference on Families has been structured to do both tasks.

From its first meeting, the White House Conference on Families National Advisory Committee planned for implementation. It budgeted funds for six months of post-Conference activities that would include completing the Conference report and beginning the job of translating the delegates' recommendations into reality.

It was clear from the outset, however, that implementation of the proposals will take far longer than six months. Therefore, the Advisory Committee directed the Conference staff to use the period to lay a foundation for action and to generate momentum that other organizations and individuals could continue throughout the decade of the Eighties. Preparing this foundation will involve states, national organizations and their affiliates, and the thousands of citizens who participated in the Conference process.

> **"Some of your recommendations may be implemented before the ink is dry."**
> Stuart Eizenstat,
> Assistant to the President

Some progress has already occurred. In August, 1980, Conference Chairperson Jim Guy Tucker testified before the House Ways and Means Committee on the delegates' overwhelming sentiment in favor of repealing the income tax marriage penalty. Executive Director John L. Carr carried the same message to the Senate Finance Committee. President Carter recently proposed a tax credit to minimize the marriage tax penalty as part of his economic revitalization program. In October, top executives of the nation's largest corporations met at the White House for a briefing on Conference recommendations affecting the workplace, such as flextime, leave policies, and child care. More than 200 national organizations attended a White House briefing on implementation activities.

Jim Guy Tucker testifies on WHCF "marriage tax" recommendations before House Ways and Means Committee.

Key elements of the six-month implementation period are:

- **Communication of Conference Results.** The Conference report, and its summary will be widely distributed. The Conference newsletter, news releases, feature articles, and television and radio appearances will be used to communicate the Conference results to the nation.

Sen. Alan Cranston, chairman of Senate Subcommittee on Child and Human Development, urged the Conference to plan for a six-month implementation period.

> **"I believe that a White House Conference on Families can be of great value at this point in our history. It can serve to reaffirm the vital functions of the family as a cornerstone of our national well being."**
> Senator Alan Cranston

- **Analysis of Conference Recommendations.** The recommendations will be analyzed to show whether they are directed to the public, private, or voluntary sectors. The President has directed all federal departments and agencies to review the proposals and report on their potential and implementation. The departments will also be asked to suggest both short and long range strategies for implementation.
- **Generating Interest and Action Among Constituencies.** Conference recommendations will be shared with key constituencies, including academic institutions, business and labor organizations, religious groups, professional associations, foundations, state and local public officials, and civic, fraternal, and human service organizations. These groups will be encouraged to inform their members about the recommendations and to utilize the proposals within their program and service areas. They will also be urged to develop action plans to generate support. In addition, key decision makers in the public and private sectors will be identified and contacted regarding specific recommendations. Existing coalitions and networks will be utilized and new ones may be established if needed.
- **Establishing Vehicles for Ongoing Implementation.** Although the WHCF will go out of existence in March 1981, implementation efforts must continue if the Conference is to reach its long-term goals. Among the resources for this continuing effort are the Office for Families within the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, the White House Domestic Policy Staff, citizens advocacy groups and a continuing monitoring and advocacy both inside and outside government.

Office for Families

President Carter launched the Office for Families last November in part to assure implementation of WHCF recommendations. The Office for Families has already launched several activities to help implement Conference recommendations. The Office is attempting to focus its limited resources on areas which Conference delegates identified as priorities.

Over the next year the Office will be a part of a demonstration project of family impact analysis by a state commission. In addition, a study is about to be completed of several areas where law and regulations interfere with family functioning.

A major initiative is the development of a consortium of organizations, "Friends of the Family," which will work to support parents in enhancing their parenting skills. This project involves publication of a catalog of parenting materials as well as television and radio public service announcements.

Publication of a "Promising Practices" inventory of exemplary community-based practices aimed at supporting families will be a first effort. In addition, "mini-grants" will be made to private and community organizations providing innovative services to families.

The Office for Families is developing an announcement for competitive funding to support state and and local implementation activities.

Implementation in the States

Early in the Conference planning, the National Advisory Committee urged each state coordinator to establish an advisory and planning committee that would continue to be active after the Conference in order to work toward implementing action of state and national recommendations. As a result, structures for implementation are already in place in more than 80% of the states.

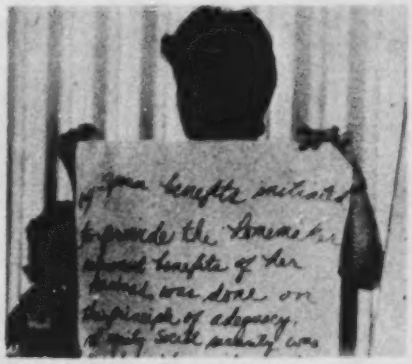
The principal strategies that seem to be emerging in the states include:

- Convening meetings of the state delegation and advisory committee to establish state priorities on recommendations;
- Meeting with Governors to discuss the final White House Conference recommendations, to urge funding for the implementation period, and to urge establishing the state delegation as an ongoing task force;
- Establishing a link between the state delegation and the Governor's Commission on Children and Youth, and changing its title to include the words "and Families";
- Briefing state legislators on WHCF recommendations and asking city and county officials to respond in writing with their opinions about the WHCF recommendations and ways they can assist in implementation;
- Writing members of Congress urging that WHCF activities continue through the Office for Families and other entities;
- Meeting with members of the business community to discuss WHCF recommendations, especially those related to work and personnel policies;
- Using the Cooperative Extension Service to educate citizen groups about the WHCF recommendations;
- Organizing a speakers bureau using members of the state delegation.

> **"The Kansas delegation hopes to be able to continue to work together in the state in support of families. We hope to be able to institute some change in public policy at state level which will be of help to families."**
> Donna Perline, Kansas Delegate

National Organization Activities

National organizations' involvement can take many forms. Some have already designated WHCF implementation as a priority of public policy and education activities. They can inform their members about Conference recommendations and the process by which the recommendations were formulated. Newsletter articles, special mailings, reprints, and speakers at meetings can all make



valuable contributions. Many recommendations call for action at the state or local levels and can best be addressed by local affiliates or chapters.

Some recommendations do not call for study but instead call for efforts to establish or reform badly needed services and programs. National organizations have a unique capacity to initiate model programs, either directly or through local affiliates, to compare approaches and techniques and to make adaptations with a maximum of flexibility.

National organizations also have broad experience in advocacy. Several are planning to focus their advocacy on WHCF proposals. The WHCF recommendations represent the input of more than 125,000 individuals and as such can lend support to existing advocacy efforts. National organizations can review their own policies and programs to make them sensitive to families. The effectiveness of these efforts can be multiplied through the establishment of *ad hoc* networks or coalitions dedicated to the achievement of specific results.

Finally, many national organizations develop their policies and programs in accordance with priorities which are established by their memberships or governing bodies. As organizations develop their priorities, Conference recommendations should be given serious consideration, both for their short- and long-term implications. A checklist for implementation activities for national organizations is available from the WHCF.

"It was an eye-opener. I've had my head in a diaper pail for six years and it's coming out. I have an obligation to be more involved in community and public policy. And, I think the work is just starting. It's up to us to see that we work to implement these recommendations on a local and then on a state level.
Lea Ybarra-Soriano, California Delegate

Individual Efforts

One of the strengths of the WHCF is the great extent to which it involved families themselves—families who were not representing the views of any organization or group but voicing their own opinions and concerns. In doing so, they shaped the Conference's substance and style. The families who patiently gave testimony at Conference hearings, who attended state conferences, and who diligently hammered out Conference recommendations in Baltimore, Minneapolis, and Los Angeles must continue to be involved.

Whether they choose to do so on an individual basis, through organizations, or through coalitions, they have many important tasks ahead. They can educate fellow citizens about the Conference through letters to the editors, and by arranging for speakers at PTA, civic, or religious meetings. They can contact public policy makers regarding specific recommendations. Letters and personal contacts are essential if Conference recommendations are to become a reality. And they can establish coalitions and networks around local issues, reaching out to others with similar concerns and involving them in the Conference implementation process.

Implementation Period Contacts

Individuals or organizations interested in learning about or participating in Conference implementation activities should contact:

The White House Conference on Families
330 Independence Avenue, S.W.
Washington, D.C. 20201

In addition, you should get in touch with state implementation contacts. They are:

Contact

Alaska
Susan Sullivan
1131 Lalande Place
Anchorage, Alaska 99504

American Samoa
Chief Unutoa S. Liufai
Office of the Governor
Governor's House
Pago Pago, American Samoa 96799

Arizona
Frank Williams
4757 E. 2nd
Tucson, Arizona 85711

Arkansas
Don Crary
Room 203, Donaghey Building
103 East Seventh
Little Rock, Arkansas 72201

California
Joseph Diaz
Office of the Secretary for Health & Welfare
915 Capitol Mall, Room 200
Sacramento, California 95814

Colorado
Dorothy Martin
2313 Tanglewood Drive
Fort Collins, Colorado 80203

Ms. Donna Behrendt
Commission on Children and Their Families
102 State Capitol Building
Denver, Colorado 80203

Connecticut
Laura Lee Simon
Hawthorne Lane
Westport, Connecticut 06880

Delaware
Patricia Nelson
Delaware Cooperative Extension Service
University of Delaware
Newark, Delaware 19711

District of Columbia
Karl Banks
Department of Human Services
122 C Street, N.W., Room 513
Washington, D.C. 20001

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Tallahassee, Florida 32304

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Office of the Governor
245 State Capitol
Atlanta, Georgia 30344

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Agana, Guam 96910

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Honolulu, Hawaii 96813

Ms. Ann Hoadley
Penthouse
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Honolulu, Hawaii 96813

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Chicago, Illinois 60611

Mr. R. A. (Rod) St. Clair
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5440 Waterbury Road
Des Moines, Iowa 50312

Shean Sherzan
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Des Moines, Iowa 50319

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Menninger Foundation
Topeka, Kansas 67401

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275 East Main Street
Frankfort, Kentucky 40601

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Ferriday, Louisiana 71334

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South Portland, Maine 04112

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Community Department of Human Services
Augusta, Maine 04333

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Columbia, Maryland 21044

Sally Michel
4 Mill Brook Road
Baltimore, Maryland 21218

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290 Thatcher Street
Brockton, Massachusetts 02402

Reverend Richard Craig
49 Franklin Street
Boston, Massachusetts 02110

Michigan
Maryann Mahaffey
President Pro Tem
Detroit City Council
Detroit, Michigan 48226

Minnesota
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St. Paul, Minnesota 55155

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979 Mecklenburg Court
South Haven, Mississippi 38671

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Division of Family Services
Broadway State Office Building
Jefferson City, Missouri 65101

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John Frankino
815 Harrison Avenue
Helena, Montana 59601

Nebraska
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Department of Public Welfare
5th Floor, State Office Bldg.
Lincoln, Nebraska 68509

Nevada
Frank Carmen
Youth Services Division
Room 603, Kinkead Building
505 E. King Street
Carson City, Nevada 89710

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Mark Segar
105 Pleasant Street
Twitchell Building
Concord, New Hampshire 03301

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51 Clifton Ave., Apt. 1308C
Newark, New Jersey 07104

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Office of the Governor
Santa Fe, New Mexico 87501

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Empire State Plaza
Albany, New York 12223

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116 West Jones
Raleigh, North Carolina 27611

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Oklahoma City, Oklahoma 73105

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Pacific Trust Territories
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Office of the High Commissioner
Trust Terr. of Pacific Islands
Saipan, CM 96950

Pennsylvania
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Commonwealth of Pennsylvania
Department of Public Welfare
Harrisburg, Pennsylvania 17120

Puerto Rico
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Santurce, PR 00910

Rhode Island
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Providence, Rhode Island 02903

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Clemson University
Clemson, South Carolina 29631

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Austin, Texas 78701

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Salt Lake City, Utah 84118

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Madison, Wisconsin

Wyoming
Everett Lantz
University of Wyoming
Room 415, Old Main
Laramie, Wyoming 82071

Office for Families

The Office for Families can be reached at the following address:

Office for Families
Administration for Children, Youth & Families
330 Independence Avenue, S.W.
Washington, D.C. 20201

III
A Year of Preparation

A Year of Listening and Action

> **"There is, for example, the military family transferred for the umpteenth time without any consideration of the effect on the children. There is the elderly woman who had a stroke and wonders why Medicare will pay for hospital care but not for home care. There is the working mother who wants to know why her corporation will grant her a sick day if she is ill but not if her child is. These are the people for whom the conference was created."**
>
> *Ellen Goodman, Syndicated Columnist*

Countless hours of hard work on the part of thousands of Americans in every state and territory contributed to the White House Conferences on Families and helped shape the recommendations that emerged from them. In addition, the year-long series of state and national activities that preceded the Conferences, and the meetings themselves, helped build a promising foundation for the implementation efforts that lay ahead.

The National Advisory Committee guided and participated in this year of action. The states, with very little time and no federal funds, developed an impressive series of more than 500 hearings, state conferences and other forums. National organizations and government agencies refocused their own activities on families, conducting special events and producing new studies and tools for dealing with family issues. Most significantly, more than 125,000 individual families made their voices heard throughout the process.

Conference Beginnings

Jimmy Carter first proposed the White House Conference on Families during his 1976 campaign for the presidency. "The American family is in trouble," Carter declared. "It is clear that the national government should have a strong pro-family policy, but the fact is that our Government has no family policy, and that is the same thing as an anti-family policy. Because of confusion or insensitivity, our Government's policies have often actually weakened our families, or even destroyed them," he pointed out.

When he established the Conference, the President declared:

"The main purpose of this White House Conference will be to examine the strengths of American families, the difficulties they face, and the ways in which family life is affected by public policies. The Conference will examine the important effects that the world of work, the mass media, the court system, private institutions and other major facets of our society have on American families."

President Carter calls on the WHCF to "reach out" to American families. (Right to left: Rosalynn Carter, Jim Guy Tucker, Betty Tucker).

Conference Leadership

In the late spring of 1979, the President selected Little Rock attorney and businessman Jim Guy Tucker of Little Rock, Arkansas as the Conference chairperson. A former member of the Ways and Means Committee of the United States Congress, a state attorney general and a prosecuting attorney, he brought to the Conference broad knowledge of state and federal policies and decision-making.

John L. Carr was named the executive director of the Conference. Carr had previously served as education director for the Campaign for Human Development, executive director of the Full Employment Action Council and coordinator for urban issues of the U.S. Catholic Conference.

WHCF Executive Director John L. Carr and Chairperson Jim Guy Tucker

In June, 1979, five deputy chairs were named to provide leadership for the Conference. They are:

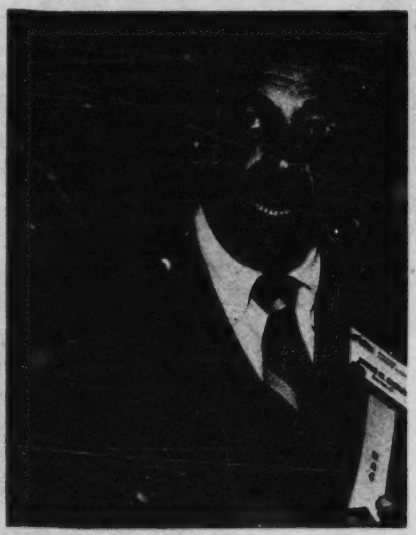
Mario Cuomo — Lieutenant governor of New York.

Guadalupe Gibson — Associate professor at the Warden School of Social Work, San Antonio, Texas.

Coretta Scott King — President of the Martin Luther King Center for Social Change, Atlanta, Georgia.

Maryann Mahaffey — President pro tem, Detroit City Council, Detroit, Michigan

Donald V. Seibert — Chairman and chief executive Officer of the J. C. Penney Company, New York.



Clockwise from left: Donald V. Siebert, Coretta Scott King, Mario Cuomo, Maryann Mahaffey, Guadalupe Gibson.

National Advisory Committee

In July, 1979, the full National Advisory Committee was appointed and met for the first time. This broad-based and diverse group of 21 men and 19 women from all across the country ranges in age from 18 to 66. They bring expertise in economics, health, law, education, psychology, welfare and family policy, as well as leadership in religions, business, labor, social service and community organizations. (For list of NAC members, see title page).

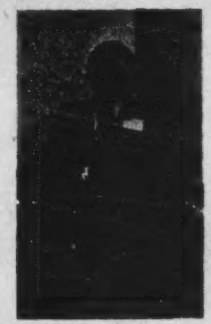
At the Committee's first meeting, President Carter pointed out that "the American family is under unprecedented pressure," and challenged the Committee "to see what we can do, not simply as a government, but as a nation, to strengthen American families." At a White House reception on July 20, the President called on the 40-member National Advisory Committee to the White House Conference on Families to "reach out, not only to scholars and to

Goals

1. To initiate broad nationwide discussions of families in the United States.
2. To develop a process of listening to and involving families themselves, especially those families which have too often been left out of the formulation of policies which affect their lives.
3. To share what is known about families — their importance, diversity, strengths, problems, responses to a changing world, etc. — and to generate and share new knowledge about families.
4. To identify public policies, institutional actions and other factors which may harm or neglect family life, as well as their differing impact on particular groups, and to recommend new policies designed to strengthen and support families.
5. To stimulate and encourage a wide variety of activities in neighborhoods, grass-roots organizations, communities, states, national organizations, media, and other public and private groups focused on supporting and strengthening families and individuals within families.
6. To examine the impact of economic forces (poverty, unemployment, inflation, etc.) on families, with special emphasis and involvement of poor families.
7. To encourage diverse groups of families to work together through local, state and national networks and other institutions for policies which strengthen and support family life.
8. To generate interest in and action on Conference recommendations among individuals, families, governmental and nongovernmental bodies at every level. (These activities will include monitoring and evaluation efforts.)

Patsy Mink

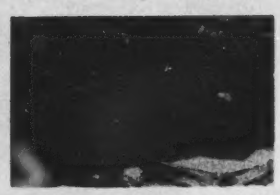
Bettye Caldwell



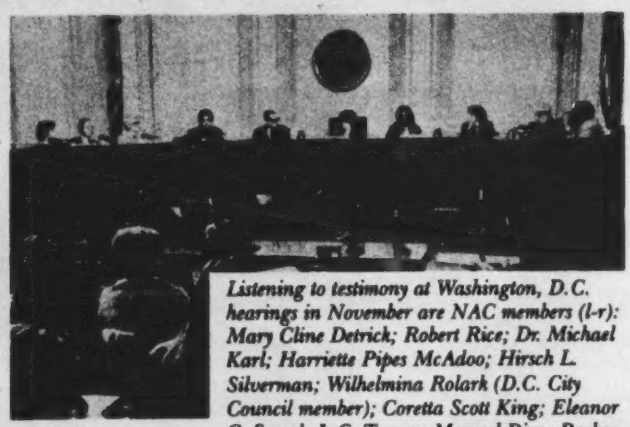
NAC member Leon Cook reports to Task Force.

NAC members Barbara Smith and Bishop Frank Stafford.

NAC members Olga Madar and J. C. Turner.



NAC members Harry Hollis and Hirsch L. Silverman.



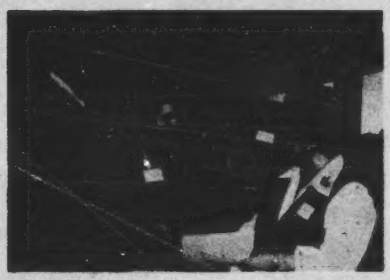
Listening to testimony at Washington, D.C. hearings in November are NAC members (l-r): Mary Cline Detrick; Robert Rice; Dr. Michael Karl; Harriette Pipes McAdoo; Hirsch L. Silverman; Wilhelmina Rolark (D.C. City Council member); Coretta Scott King; Eleanor C. Smeal; J. C. Turner; Manuel Diaz; Rashey Moten; and Charlotte Holstein.

experts, but to many thousands of Americans around this country who know from their own experience what makes a family strong."

At the July 19 and 20 meeting, the National Advisory Committee called for several White House Conferences around the nation in the summer of 1980. "We are going to take the White House Conference to the people," Jim Guy Tucker declared, "We want to listen to and involve families themselves. Through several White House Conferences we can involve more people in setting an agenda for action on behalf of America's families, than we can in a single Washington event," he said.

The Committee also adopted the goals for the Conference and a set of themes to guide Conference discussions. (See boxes)

With its goals, themes and process established, the WHCF embarked on its year of action for families. The chronology which follows outlines the many events and forums which took place over twelve months.



NAC members Manuel Diaz, Gloria Chavez, Ildaura Murillo-Rhohde, and Guadalupe Gibson.

NAC members Harold Yee, Charles Bannerman, Harriette Pipes McAdoo, Jim Guy Tucker and Rashey Moten.

NAC member James A. Autry.

NAC Deputy Chair Coretta Scott King (L) with NAC member Georgia L. McMurray.

NAC member Jeanne Cahill.

NAC members Karen Fenton, Norman Fenton, Robert L. Hill and Robert B. Hill.

Ruby Duncan and Manuel Diaz, Jr. with Vice President Walter Mondale.

Themes

Families: Foundation of Society

Family Strengths and Supports
Families are the oldest, most fundamental human institution. Families serve as a source of strength and support for their members and our society.

Diversity of Families
American families are pluralistic in nature. Our discussion of issues will reflect an understanding and respect of cultural, ethnic and regional differences as well as differences in structure and lifestyles.

The Changing Realities of Family Life
American society is dynamic, constantly changing. The roles and structure of families and individual family members are growing, adapting and evolving in new and different ways.

The Impact of Public and Private Institutional Policies on Families
The policies of government and major private institutions have profound effects on families. Increased sensitivity to the needs of families is required, as well as on-going action and research on the specific nature of the impact of public and private institutional policies.

The Impact of Discrimination
Many families are exposed to discrimination. This affects individual family members as well as the family unit as a whole.

Families with Special Needs
Certain families have special needs and these needs often produce unique strengths. The needs of families with handicapped members, single-parent families, elderly families and many other families with special needs will be addressed during the Conference.

WHCF: A Year of Action

SEPTEMBER 1979						
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September, 1979

9/7 NAC adopts guidelines for state activities, including delegate selection and issue development activities.

9/11 More than 250 leaders of national organizations are briefed on participation in WHCF. *Guide for National Organizations* is distributed. (More than 12,000 were ultimately distributed.)

9/15 State coordinators meet in Washington to review manual for state participation and share plans.

9/27 State coordinators meet in Kansas City, Kansas, to review state guidelines.

9/28-29 First national hearings are held in Kansas City YWCA and Bethel College in Lindsborg, Kansas. More than 250 witnesses testify on problems and opportunities for American families. Major concerns include government insensitivity, parent-child relationships, and family life education.

OCTOBER 1979						
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October, 1979

10/12-13 Hearings in Nashville and Memphis, Tennessee, draw more than 500. Leading topics include family structures, economics, adoption, foster care and other special challenges.

10/15 President Carter issues directive to all federal departments establishing Interagency Task Force for the WHCF and announced permanent Office of Families to insure follow-up on Conference recommendations.

10/26-27 More than 240 persons testify at Denver hearings held in a public library, museum, state capitol and inner-city high school. Government insensitivity, housing, child care, welfare and family crises are prime concerns.

NOVEMBER 1979						
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November, 1979

11/15-16 More than 275 persons testify in Hartford and Stamford, Connecticut. Government insensitivity, family life education, economics, family violence, health care and child care top concerns. HUD Secretary Moon Landrieu keynotes hearings.

11/29 "Celebration of Families" draws hundreds of families to Smithsonian Arts and Industries Building for an evening of fun and celebration on eve of Washington, D.C. hearings.

11/30 HEW Secretary Patricia Harris opens Washington, D.C. hearings on Capitol Hill. More than 20 members of Congress testify, as well as over 100 other witnesses. Corporate Task Force of 30 companies meets in November to ensure business input to WHCF.

State Activities in November

- California Hearings
- Illinois Hearings
- Missouri Hearings
- South Dakota Conference
- Virginia Conference

"Punch and Judy" greet Amy Carter at Celebration for Families which drew hundreds to Smithsonian Institution in November 1979.

DECEMBER 1979						
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December, 1979

12/1 Washington, D.C. hearings conclude at District Building. More than 300 persons testify, sharing concerns on government insensitivity, economics, child care, and religious cults, among other issues.

12/7-8 Hearings in Detroit and Oak Park, Michigan, draw nearly 400 witnesses discussing unemployment, divorce, family violence and government influence on families.

More than 15 WHCF briefings for national organizations are held in November and December.

State Activities in December

- California Hearings
- Illinois Hearing
- Missouri Hearings
- Oklahoma State Conference
- Oregon Hearings

JANUARY 1980						
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January, 1980

1/5 More than 200 people testify at final hearings in Seattle, Washington. Weather forces cancellation of Yakima hearings. Top issues include single parents, economics, family planning, education, child care and cults.

1/21 Committee begins work on Research Forum.

State Activities in January

- Georgia Hearings (2)
- Guam Village Conference (19)
- Minnesota Regional Conferences (7)
- Missouri Hearings (3)
- New York Regional Conferences (3)
- North Carolina Issues Ballot
- Ohio County Conferences (88)
- Puerto Rico Regional Forums (4)
- Utah County Hearings (29)
- Vermont County Meetings (14)

1/23-24 NAC approves criteria for selecting at-large delegates, reviews format for White House Conferences and works on background papers.

Families Today, a two-volume study of mental health issues, is published by the National Institute of Mental Health.

FEBRUARY 1980						
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February, 1980

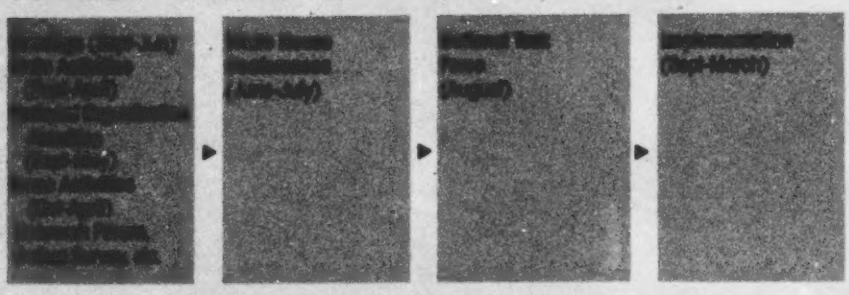
2/25 WHCF Chairperson Jim Guy Tucker conducts briefing for members of Congress and their staffs. Tucker addresses National Governors Conference.

Census Bureau publishes WHCF Chartbook on American Families.

State Activities in February

- Alaska Hearings (5)
- Arizona Workshops (2)
- Colorado Conference
- Delaware Regional Conferences (3)
- Guam District Conference (4)
- Hawaii Hearings (5)
- Iowa Hearings (7)
- Kansas Conference
- Kentucky Conference
- Maine Regional Forum (1)
- Maryland Regional Conferences (5)
- Mississippi Regional Meetings (10)
- Montana Issues Seminars
- Nebraska Family Forums (6)
- New Mexico County Forums (32)
- New Hampshire Regional Forums (4)
- New York Regional Conferences (2)
- North Dakota Regional Workshops
- Oregon Conference
- Pennsylvania Regional Conferences (4)
- South Carolina County Conferences (44)
- Tennessee State Conference
- Texas Hearings (2)
- Utah County Hearings
- Vermont County Meetings (14)
- Wyoming Conference

WHCF Process:



MARCH 1980						
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March, 1980

133 national organizations submit issue priority forms.

Corporate Task Force commissions report on Families and Workplace.

State Activities in March

- Alaska Conference
- Arizona Workshops (4)
- Arkansas Conference
- Connecticut Conference
- District of Columbia Conference
- Guam Conference
- Georgia Conference
- Hawaii Hearings (5)
- Idaho Issue Survey
- Illinois Conference
- Iowa Conference
- Louisiana District Conference (8)
- Maine Regional Forums (4)
- Maryland Regional Conference (5)
- Massachusetts Regional Hearings and Conference (6)
- Mississippi State Conference
- Montana Issues Seminars
- Nebraska State Conference
- Nevada Hearings (4)
- New Hampshire Conference
- New Jersey Regional Hearings (4)
- New Mexico District Hearings (7)
- Ohio State Conference
- Puerto Rico Conference
- South Carolina County Conference
- Tennessee State Conference
- Texas Hearings (3)
- Utah State Conference
- Vermont Conference
- Washington Regional Conference (6)
- West Virginia State Conference
- Wisconsin Conference

APRIL 1980						
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April, 1980

4/11 At National Press Club, Tucker releases analysis of national hearings, indicating government insensitivity.

4/11-12 National Research Forum on Family Issues draws more than 500 persons to Capitol Hill to hear eminent scholars and dialogue between researchers and others on families. Economic pressures, support for specific families and child care top list of concerns of more than 2000 witnesses.

4/12-13 NAC meets and approves format for the three White House Conferences.

4/14 Corporate Task Force meets for third time to explore issues affecting families and business participation in WHCF.

State Activities in April

- Delaware Conference
- Michigan Conference
- North Dakota Conference
- Rhode Island Regional Meetings and State Hearings (5)
- Florida Issue Survey and Delegate Selection

MAY 1980						
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May, 1980

Four delegate workbooks on Economic Well-Being, Challenges and Responsibilities, Human Needs and Major Institutions are sent to delegates.

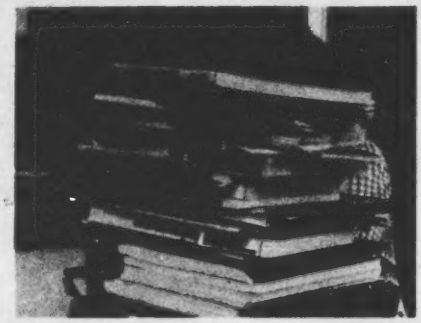
Hearings Analysis of 10,000 pages of WHCF hearing transcripts is sent to delegates.

State issue reports are sent to delegates.

At-large delegates named.

State Activities in May

- Maine State Conference
- New Mexico State Conference



JUNE 1980						
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June, 1980

6/2 George Gallup, Jr. and Jim Guy Tucker release results of comprehensive Gallup Survey "American Families—1980."

6/5-7 President Carter opens first White House Conference in Baltimore. More than 700 delegates from eastern states discuss and adopt 57 recommendations. Strongest support shown for combatting drug and alcohol abuse, encouraging home care of elderly, changes in personnel policies and elimination of the marriage tax.

6/19-21 More than 600 delegates adopt 50 recommendations at second White House Conference in Minneapolis. They hear from Presidential Assistant Anne Wexler, actor Ozzie Davis and more than 175 entertainers at cultural event. Top issue is government impact on families, followed by concerns for social justice, drug and alcohol abuse, and sex and violence on television.

JULY 1980						
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July, 1980

7/10-12 At third White House Conference, held in Los Angeles, delegates from western states adopt 56 recommendations, with strongest votes on partnership between parents and schools, supports for handicapped persons and family impact analysis. Speakers include HHS Secretary Patricia Roberts Harris, author Alex Haley and actor Ed Asner.

7/11 HUD releases first comprehensive study of restrictive rental practices against families with children at WHCF in Los Angeles. More than 25% of rental units ban children, study says.

AUGUST 1980						
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31						

August, 1980

8/5 Implementation begins. WHCF director testifies before Senate Finance Committee on marriage tax penalty.

8/19 WHCF Chair Jim Guy Tucker testifies before House Ways and Means Committee on marriage tax and other tax recommendations.

8/19-20 117 member National Task Force develops and approves summaries of WHCF recommendations. They propose a variety of specific implementation strategies at state and national level. Vice President Mondale congratulates WHCF on its achievements and expresses Administration's commitment to follow through on recommendations. Stuart Eizenstat, President's domestic policy advisor says the WHCF is already affecting policy decisions.

8/21 NAC meets to plan implementation efforts.

8/28 President Carter proposes tax deduction to minimize Marriage Tax Penalty as part of economic revitalization package.

In start-up of implementation process, WHCF Director John L. Carr testifies on the "marriage tax" before Senate Finance Committee.

Families Speak Out

> "Children babbled, played under chairs and made yogurt messes at yesterday's regional hearing of the White House Conference on Families, as adults around them testified earnestly about the issues facing American families."
> *Seattle Times*

The National Advisory Committee chose to begin this process by listening to families themselves. The seven national hearings of the WHCF were exhilarating, exhausting, stimulating and moving. More than 2,000 Americans voiced their concerns, fears, passions and hopes for families. The quantity and quality of testimony far surpassed expectations.

The huge outpouring of concerns and recommendations both overwhelmed and challenged the WHCF. We heard from two members of the President's Cabinet, more than 25 members of Congress, eminent scholars, and leaders of national organizations. Most importantly, we heard from hundreds upon hundreds of ordinary family members—mothers, fathers, and children; defenders of traditional values and advocates of alternative lifestyles; affluent suburban couples and inner-city mothers on public assistance; as well as business, labor and community leaders. We heard from the unemployed, victims of family violence, participants in marriage enrichment and self-help groups. We experienced the incredible richness, diversity and strength of American families. We saw the human faces and emotions that give life to the statistical charts and philosophical abstractions which frequently dominate discussion of family issues.

2000 Stories

Their message was enormously positive. Americans from every walk of life, of all races, of every political and philosophical persuasion demonstrated a deep faith in families as the bedrock, the starting point for surviving in an increasingly complex society.

Many witnesses told of how their families were making it, but, in Hartford, a young priest from the Boston area told of a working man caught by the "system." After losing his wife to cancer, he found that his modest annual salary of $15,000 made him ineligible for subsidized day care for his four children. When the pressure turned him to alcohol, the state took away his children and placed them in foster homes. The cost to the family was tragedy; the cost to the state was $45,000.

At the hearings, in Oak Park, Michigan, the mother of two

young children described the horror of spouse abuse, the daily dread of the unexpected flare-up and inevitable beating by an unhappy husband. In Denver, a Hispanic teenager graphically depicted the impact of her father's unemployment on her family's life. A black father told the Nashville panel how difficult it was to convince his son of the virtue of work when he himself had been unable to find a job for more than a year. Deserted by her husband, a middle-aged woman from the Seattle area told how she had struggled and succeeded in raising five children with welfare assistance.

Hearing Locations and Dates

NAC members who conducted the hearings also made site visits to innovative programs and groups serving families. NAC members and WHCF staff visited an inner-city health care center, a public school for handicapped children, a cooperative child-care center, a shelter for abused spouses, a home for runaway youth and a senior citizens center, among others. More than 4,000 people attended the hearings and half of that group were witnesses. The entire process was recorded and transcribed, yielding more than 10,000 pages of testimony.

Hearing Locations and Dates

Kansas City, Kansas	*September 28*
Linsborg, Kansas	*September 29*
Nashville, Tennessee	*October 12*
Memphis, Tennessee	*October 13*
Denver, Colorado	*October 26-27*
Hartford, Connecticut	*November 16*
Stamford, Connecticut	*November 17*
U.S. Congress, Washington, D.C.	*November 30*
District Building, Washington, D.C.	*December 1*
Detroit, Michigan	*December 7*
Oak Park, Michigan	*December 8*
Seattle, Washington	*January 11*

Cults

While not a focus of discussion at the state level, the subject of cults and their influence on families emerged as a major issue during the national hearings. The Chairman and Ranking Member of the House Foreign Affairs Committee, Representative Clement Zablocki and Representative William Broomfield, who conducted hearings on the Jonestown tragedy, testified on the issue, as did dozens of other citizens, many of whom had experienced family disruption. As a result of the hearings and numerous inquiries, some 50 Congressmen have written to the WHCF relaying their constituents' concerns. Chairperson Jim Guy Tucker will be working with appropriate governmental agencies and private groups to explore how these activities hurt families and what legal and constitutional remedies are available to families and society.

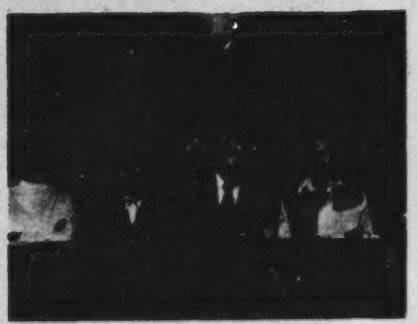
In general, hearing testimony served several purposes. It was a sounding board; it pinpointed issues for all the delegates to consider; and it humanized those issues through direct and personal statements. It is worth noting that the concerns expressed at the hearings (the top 25 are listed below) were very similar to the final recommendations approved at all three Conferences.

Representatives Clement J. Zablocki and William Broomfield, chairman and ranking member of the House Foreign Affairs Committee, respectively, testify on their investigation of the Jonestown tragedy and the negative impact of "cults" on families.

Major Concerns

Using the data from each of the seven hearings developed by the National Institute for Advanced Studies, the following listing presents the major concerns of the individuals who participated in the WHCF hearings. Related topics have been grouped together for reasons of clarity. In the first fifteen concerns, a limited breakdown of the major issues within each topic is included.

> **"It is alarming that many parents are frankly admitting so early in a child's life that the natural, intense spark of creativity and joy they see in their youngsters will be snuffed out by an unsympathetic school system."**
> Thomas Beuacher, Detroit Hearing



More than 2000 family members testified at WHCF hearings.

Rank/ Concern/ Frequency		Rank/ Concern/ Frequency	
1. Sensitivity of Government	299	**11. Family Violence**	124
• sensitivity to families (214)		• child abuse	
• sensitivity to racial/ethnic/religious differences (49)		• spouse abuse	
• accessibility and accountability (21)		• abuse of the elderly	
• appropriate role of government		**12. Family Planning**	123
• specific policies which hurt, help or ignore families		• concern about abortion (88)	
• family impact analysis		• other family planning issues (30)	
2. Economic Pressures	204	**13. Financial Assistance to Families**	121
• inflation and poverty (138)		• welfare and welfare reform (75)	
• unemployment (66)		• Social Security (12)	
3. Support for Specific Families	193	• food stamps (5)	
• traditional families (77)		• other (29)	
• single-parent families (58)		**14. Housing**	82
• extended families (19)		• cost and quality (45)	
• others or general (39)		• discrimination	
4. Child Care	184	• neighborhood factors	
• availability of quality child care (137)		**15. Media**	70
• cost (23)		• impact of television and radio (30)	
• role of family, neighborhood, community groups, churches, and government		• support for family values	
5. Education	171	• presentation of family life, minorities, women, housewives, etc.	
• quality and availability (68)		**16. Divorce and Separation**	50
• home/school relations (54)		**17. Law**	48
• moral concerns (26)		**18. Alcohol and Drug Abuse**	47
• responsiveness to diverse needs (23)		**19. Tax Policy**	46
6. Health	161	**20. Families and Aging**	44
• availability, cost and quality (63)		**21. Families and Handicapping Conditions**	39
• preventive health care (41)		**22. Adoption and Foster Care**	35
• maternal and infant care (30)		**23. Social Services**	30
• mental health (24)		**24. Marriage**	25
7. Work and Families	149	**25. Military Families**	20
• flexible employment practices (43)			
• discrimination in work (40)			
• increased participation (36)			
• business and families (24)			
• counseling on the job (8)			
8. Family Life Education	147		
• preparation for parenting (87)			
• preparation for marriage (26)			
• sex education (22)			
• other or general (13)			
9. Children and Parents	130		
• responsible parenting (52)			
• supports for parents and children (39)			
• general (39)			
10. Community Institutions	127		
• religious institutions (80)			
• self-help groups and others (47)			

A full and detailed analysis of the hearings, prepared by the National Institute for Advanced Studies, is available from the WHCF and the Government Printing Office.

Selecting Delegates and Issues

Charged with the crucial task of selecting delegates and issues for the White House Conferences, the states conducted more than 500 events involving more than 125,000 Americans.

The success of these efforts, which remarkably were conducted without a dime of federal funding, was a direct result of strong support by the governors and the extraordinary commitment and hard work of state coordinators. In five months of intense activity, the states chose 1700 Conference delegates and submitted some 5,000 recommendations.

> **"We're doing this on a shoestring budget. We've had husbands and kids stuffing envelopes, and somebody's daughter did a lot of typing for us. A friend of another committee member located a supply of paper in a dumpster, and it is being used willingly. But that is the neat thing about this, it's a grass-roots kind of thing."**
>
> Donna Behrendt,
> Colorado Coordinator

State Activities

The process began in May, 1979, when President Carter wrote each governor asking his or her help in convening a White House Conference on Families. Nearly all governors quickly appointed a state coordinator who took on the responsiblity for coordinating Conference activities within the state.

The WHCF emphasized the need for broad citizen participation with special emphasis on low-income, minority and ordinary family members. States had considerable latitude in planning and scheduling activities, and were urged to draw on the creativity and initiative of their own states in developing and carrying out delegate selection and issue identification activities.

> **"The conservatives say they intend to remain assertive. Mrs. Tottle Ellis of Nashville, the national vice president of the Eagle Forum, said in an interview: 'I'm not sure how we will do it, but I intend for the pro-family forces to win in Tennessee. And if we can't get the representatives for the Minneapolis meeting, then I'm simply going to put out press releases saying we were closed out.'**
> *New York Times*

The response was extraordinary. Forty-eight of the fifty states conducted WHCF activities. Only Alabama and Indiana did not formally participate. Many went beyond WHCF requirements and developed innovative processes of listening and deciding on issues and delegates:

- 24 states held both regional hearings or forums *and* a statewide conference;
- 14 states held a series of regional conferences or hearings;
- 10 states held statewide conferences;
- 3 states used unique random selection processes with media and issue development efforts;
- 3 territories selected delegations.

Delegate Selection

At its second meeting in September, the NAC adopted guidelines for state activities and delegate selection. These rules remained in force throughout the Conference and were complied with in every state sending a delegation to the Conference. They also established a formula for allocating the 2,000 delegates based on population. Under this formula, each state was allotted three times the total number of Senators and Representatives in the U.S. Congress. These delegates were to be selected by a process which included peer selection (e.g., election or open random selection) and gubernatorial appointment with a minimum of 30% by each method. The selection of the remaining 40% was left to the states, as long as other WHCF guidelines were followed. These included non-discrimination and affirmative action requirements, as well as a provision that a majority of delegates from any state could not be professionals in areas of family programs or services.

This summary can only hint at the remarkable cooperation and commitment of governors who, regardless of party or ideology, gave their crucial support, the dedication and incredible hard work of the state coordinators in organizing forums and workshops across their states, and the commitment of the more than 125,000 Americans who participated at the state level—all without federal financial support.

Research Forum

Building a Factual Framework

On April 10, 1980, Stuart Eizenstat, assistant to the President for domestic affairs, told a Capitol Hill audience of 400 concerned citizens and scholars that "American families are very much alive, and possess enormous strength and vitality. Therefore, let's look at these strengths and address ourselves to ways to protect and preserve stable families."

Eizenstat opened the WHCF National Research Forum on Family Issues, a two-day gathering of family scholars, policy makers, service providers, representatives of national organizations and community activists. Essential support for the session was provided by the National Endowment for the Humanities.

A. Sidney Johnson, III, NAC member and director, Family Impact Seminar, George Washington University.

A Factual Framework

In launching this effort, Eizenstat said, "We have to understand the important roles families play in individual lives and the relevance to public policy. We also have to recognize that *ad hoc* or haphazard attempts to take into account family ties and influences do not do justice to the role of families within our society, and the effects of policy on families."

Introducing Eizenstat and chairing the Forum was Dr. Robert B. Hill, Director of Research for the National Urban League and a member of the WHCF National Advisory Committee. In his opening remarks, Dr. Hill stressed the importance of scholars' involvement with the WHCF process because it brings them into "direct contact with real families and real problems." Hill also emphasized the tremendous ethnic, racial and economic diversity of American families, pointing out that minority families were living under particularly acute pressures and especially needful of change in policies and programs.

NAC member Robert B. Hill chaired WHCF Research Forum.

Family Myths

A basic question seemed uppermost in the minds of participants throughout the sessions. Are American families disintegrating or are they simply undergoing some important changes? Underscoring the

Dr. Tamara Hareven

question was a general feeling of optimism about families and the future. However, the optimism was balanced by differing views of the many changes families have undergone and the directions necessary for their survival.

In the session "Changing Realities of Family Life," for example, Dr. Tamara Hareven shared some stimulating data that refutes a number of commonly held myths about families of the American past. According to Hareven, a professor of history at Clark University and a research associate at Harvard, the perceived golden age of family relations when three generations lived happily in the same household exemplifies that mythology. In Hareven's view, this misperception has led people to view the present, with its many single-parent families and families physically distant from all but primary members, as a period of decline and family breakdown.

Hareven stated that her research on the pre-industrial American family indicates there never was a time when three generations lived under the same roof. In light of the high mortality rate of past generations, most parents could not expect to live with their grandchildren. Households were quite similar to households today except that they were more likely to include strangers such as boarders, lodgers, apprentices or servants. Also there was far less emphasis on the family as a private retreat. Hareven concluded that what we are witnessing today is not the breakup of traditional family patterns but the emergence of a pluralism in family ways.

> **"All families need honorary members. Families need to be elastic. The healthiest children are those who grow up surrounded by concentric rings of well-wishers. People whose place in their lives is fixed and constant."**
>
> Jane Howard, Author

Jane Howard

A Debate on the Future

During an evening session, Urie Bronfenbrenner, Elizabeth Abramawitz, Jane Howard, and James Dobson addressed the questions "Why are families receiving so much attention in the 1980s and what does this mean for the future?"

Dr. James Dobson, associate clinical professor of pediatrics, University of Southern California, saw the questions as a positive way of asking a negative question, that is, "Why is the family in so much trouble today, and will it survive?" He identified two major problems facing families: family isolation and a breakdown in moral structure.

Dr. James Dobson

Dobson admonished policy makers in Congress and elsewhere to stop interfering in family matters and refrain from imposing itself in the marital relationship as well as the relationship between parents and children.

In sharp contrast, Dr. Urie Bronfenbrenner, Professor of Human Development, Family Studies and Psychology at Cornell University took an opposite position. Speaking of the role of parents and other nurturing adults, he said, "The capacity for an adult to engage in care and joint activity with a child or to support other adults in that role requires public policies and practices that provide opportunity, status, encouragement, freedom of choice, example,

and above all, time for parenthood, primarily by parents but also by other adults in the child's environment both within and outside the home." Bronfenbrenner stressed the need for strong support systems for families and bonds between families and major institutions.

Bronfenbrenner pointed out that outside institutions impact on families and that there must be policies and programs that support family life.

Dr. Urie Bronfenbrenner

Media, Education, Law

One of the most lively discussions during the Forum took place in the session on the media and families. Dr. George Gerbner and his associates from the Annenberg School of Communications stated that the average viewer watches television 30 hours a week. Media, they pointed out, has taken on many of the socializing functions formerly the exclusive territory of families, religious institutions, and later on, the schools.

The influence that education exercises on the quality of family life was underscored by Dr. Bernard C. Watson, Vice President for Academic Administration, Temple University. Dr. Watson stated, "that of all the demands being placed on schools today, the most fundamental is that schools be a positive force in strengthening the family." He went on to present data which show a clear relationship between education level of the head of household and the educational attainment of other family members.

University of California Law Professor Robert Mnookin spoke of recent trends in family law and noted that most divorcing couples now resolve or settle marital problems central to divorce without bringing any contested issue to the court for a decision. Mnookin's session traced the recent movement to private ordering of family law disputes and discussed the increasing use of arbitration, mediation and joint custody as well as the needs for a special family law judiciary.

> **"Last week in Washington . . . experts on the family gathered to discuss the family in a research forum sponsored by the White House Conference on Families . . . They believe the family is working overtime to survive. It has to, they say, because it has little support from its institutions — those of the government, church and business.**
>
> *Washington Star*

Ethnicity and Religion

In the panel on Racial and Ethnic Diversity, Dr. Juan Ramos, Director of Special Mental Health Programs for the National Institute of Mental Health (HHS), voiced concern about the lack of racial and ethnic content in the curriculum taught to the "mental health core—psychiatrists, psychologists, social workers and psychiatric nurses—who too often know little or nothing about the culture and values of their patients and clients. Yet the assumption is made," Dr. Ramos states, "that they're skilled, expert and trained. This is nonsense, yet we continue to believe this is the right way."

Dr. Juan Ramos

In a panel discussion on families and religion, representatives from several faiths and denominations discussed the importance of religion to American families. Among the various points were that

> **"Eleven million children live in poverty. Half of those in single parent homes. For these families a variety of supports is so important."**
> Sheila Kamerman, Columbia University

religion:

- helps shape and tests values in a loving community.
- gives purpose to life beyond self.
- makes up much of the loss resulting from the lack of extended families.
- gives answers to families on what they are, why they exist and where they are going.
- creates strong marriages and gives direction to our lives.
- is important in building enduring relationships and commitments to family members.

Economic Stability

Dr. Juanita Kreps, former secretary of commerce and Research Forum speaker.

Dr. Juanita Kreps, professor of economics at Duke University and former secretary of commerce, presented the closing address of the Research Forum. In her speech on *Economic Forces and Family Life,* Dr. Kreps mapped out several trends such as changing structure and sizes of families, rates of inflation which are linked to labor force activity, the threat of unemployment and family consumption patterns.

The experience of scholars sharing and discussing their findings with members of social service organizations and community agencies created a climate of understanding which enhanced the entire Conference process. The Forum helped lay an informed and factual base for the Conferences which followed.

Informative and stimulating research papers were also presented by:

Structural Diversity of Families and Households
- Dr. Mary Jo Bane

Families and Older People: Some Myths, Some Realities
- Dr. Robert N. Butler

Changes in Economic Aspects of Family Life
- Dr. Marilyn M. Dunsing

Teenage Parenthood and Family Support
- Dr. Frank F. Furstenberg, Jr.

The Impact of Public Policies on Families: How Do We Measure It?
- Dr. Ruth Hubbell

Social Services: Child Welfare Services
- Dr. Alfred Kahn
- Dr. Sheila Kamerman

Families and the Workplace
- Dr. Rosabeth Kanter
- Dr. Allan Cohen

The Impact of Employment Discrimination on the Family
- Dr. Dorothy Newman

Substance Abuse
- Dr. Mitchell S. Rosenthal

Income Maintenance and Financial Assistance to Families
- Dr. Alvin Schorr

Family Support Networks and Family Values
- Dr. Carol B. Stack

Family Violence
- Dr. Barbara Star

Positive Family Functioning
- Dr. Marvin Sussman

Housing Problems of Families
- Dr. Anthony Yezer

Child Care
- Irving Lazar

Discrimination
- Janet Giele

National Organizations:

Mobilizing for Action

National organizations played a key role in the activities of the White House Conference, on Families. Long before the White House Conference, many groups were advocating more sensible and sensitive treatment of families by policymakers and major institutions.

On September 11, 1979, more than 250 representatives of national organizations attended a briefing at the Old Executive Office Building in Washington, D.C. WHCF Chairperson Jim Guy Tucker and the Conference staff urged national organizations to involve their members and affiliates in national hearings, state conferences, and other activities. During the fall and winter of 1979-80, the Conference staff held fifteen briefings for several hundred national organizations clustered by their particular interests.

Four coalitions with different agendas and constituencies demonstrated a continuing interest in the Conference:

- **Catholic Coordinating Committee for the WHCF:** This group sought to involve Catholics in Conference Activities.
- **Coalition for the White House Conference on Families:** This diverse group of 50 national religious, advocacy and social service organizations formed to monitor and encourage participation.
- **HEW Coalition:** This coalition of major Black social service and professional organizations sought to insure Black participation and attention to issues affecting Black families.
- **Pro-Family Coalition:** This group of conservative and "new right" organizations sought to mobilize participation around issues such as definition of a family and abortion.

> **"We believe the most significant result of the White House Conference on Families was to put American families firmly on the national agenda."**
> Catholic Committee for the White House Conference on Families

> **"The Conference provided an invaluable opportunity for the Black community to openly and publicly discuss their perspective on public policy and its impact on Black families. The success of our efforts will only prove fruitful when they are endorsed by the President and included in his policy agenda."**
> Evelyn Moore, Chair, HEW Coalition

State Activities, At-Large Delegates, Issue Priorities

National organizations and their state and local affiliates were deeply involved in organizing and assisting with state conferences and encouraged their members to attend. As part of this effort, tens of thousands of pieces of Conference literature were distributed by dozens of organizations

In addition to their participation at the state level, national organizations submitted hundreds of nominations for at-large dele-

gates and observers to the Conference's national sessions. Approximately 65 of the 310 at-large delegates represented large national organizations, and representatives from more than 200 national organizations sent official observers to one of the three conferences. Acting primarily through the major coalitions, national groups were deeply involved in organizing delegates by particular interests at all three conferences.

> **"The pro-family people think that the best way to help the family is to get the government out of family life."**

As part of the issue development process, national organizations were asked to identify up to five issues they believe will be most important to families in the 1980s, together with policy, program, and strategy recommendations. The 133 responses were printed in the *National Organizations Resource Book* which was distributed to Conference delegates. This enabled national organizations to communicate their priorities and recommendations directly to the delegates without editing or censorship.

Religious groups were especially active in Conference activities. At a meeting of the Southern Baptist Convention, Tucker commented, "As we've gone across this country, families have said they expect more, and get more, from their churches and synagogues than any other institution. Families find irreplaceable strength, support and values within their religious beliefs, practices and traditions." The Catholic Church designated 1980 as the "Year of the Family" and the 1980s as the "Decade of the Family." The U.S. Catholic Conference held a national meeting on family ministry and family education. The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints continues to emphasize the importance of family values in its programs, especially "Family Time." Lutheran Church Women entered their third year of family emphasis in which they are conducting hundreds of seminars throughout the United States. The American Jewish Committee, which has established a Center for the Family, held ceremonies in March, 1980, marking the opening of its National Jewish Family Center.

> **"I think there was more consensus than controversy. If you take the top issues of this conference, we have the beginnings of a new social policy discussion."**
> Joe Giordano, Chair, Coalition for the White House Conference on Families

Some organizations sponsored unique projects. For example, the Los Angeles-based United Neighborhood Organization (UNO) conducted a series of house meetings from which they concluded that families are most concerned about economic issues. UNO culminated its project with a "Celebration of Families" for more than 2,000 participants. The Family Impact Seminar initiated a groundbreaking state and local field project to analyze how local policies affect families.

National organizations are expected to play an important role in the Conference implementation period, conducting education, lobbying and other activities focused on the Conference recommendations and the needs of families.

Implications for the Workplace

Under the leadership of Donald V. Seibert, WHCF deputy chair, and chairman and chief executive officer of JCPenney Company, Inc., the Corporate Task Force was organized to stimulate and coordinate business involvement in the Conference. It also served as a means to discuss work place issues within the business community, to recruit at-large delegates and expertise from business, and to coordinate financial and in-kind support from the corporate sector.

The Task Force consisted of some 30 major corporations — ranging from RCA to Citibank to the American Council on Life Insurance—and met on an ongoing basis to discuss the Conference process and family issues related to the workplace. As part of this effort, the Task Force commissioned its own personnel policy study on the workplace. In March, 1980, the group produced the research document "Corporations and the Family in the 1980's," a comprehensive examination of work/family issues in America.

Significantly, workplace issues emerged as the most strongly supported issue of the three White House Conferences. Delegates consistently called for measures to make personnel policies more sensitive to families, including more flexible job schedules, improved sick leave policies, maternal leave policies, the possibility of part-time employment opportunities, and child care for workers.

Following the Conferences, the Corporate Task Force formed the nucleus of a group of representatives from some of the nation's largest employers who met at the White House in late October, 1980, for the WHCF's first major implementation effort. After a briefing on Conference workplace recommendations, the group listened to a panel of business executives describe a range of family-related personnel policies and programs underway at their companies. Featured speakers at the briefing included WHCF Chair Jim Guy Tucker, Donald Seibert, Presidential Assistant Anne Wexler and Commerce Secretary Philip M. Klutznick.

As prime mover of this advocacy project, the Corporate Task Force promised to be an important factor in anticipated activities during the remainder of the six-month Conference implementation period.

Control Data Board Chairman William Norris addresses business briefing. (Left to right) General Motors Vice President Steve Fuller, J.C. Penney Chairman, Donald Seibert, General Mills Chief Administrative Officer, Paul Parker, and WHCF Chair, Jim Guy Tucker.

> **"Of special interest to business is the fact that the number one Conference recommendation deals with the impact of workplace policies on families. Of the 150 recommendations, the most important is right in our own area of responsibility."**
>
> Donald V. Seibert, CEO, JCPenney, in a letter to the business community

Intergovernmental Cooperation:

Government-Wide Focus on Families

> **"The Conference will serve as a catalyst for continuing and expanding action on family issues in the federal government. To ensure this development, I've today directed all federal departments and agencies to support and to cooperate with the Conference's activities."**
>
> President Carter

Health and Human Services Secretary Patricia Roberts Harris keynoted Washington hearings and Los Angeles Conference. Under her leadership, HHS served as the lead agency for the Conference providing essential support and assistance.

The White House Conference on Families dealt with issues that touch on virtually every aspect of government. Its success would not have been possible without the cooperation and assistance of a wide range of federal departments, agencies and programs. They provided resource persons, specially prepared reference material, and assistance with hearings and other Conference activities.

In October of 1979, President Carter called on each federal department to assist the White House Conference on Families. His mandate established an Interagency Task Force to coordinate this government-wide support. The response was excellent. More than 50 federal departments and agencies met at the White House in November, 1979, to hear about Conference plans and needs. Over the course of the year their contributions were invaluable.

The White House: President and Mrs. Carter gave unfailing support for the Conference. They hosted a White House reception for the National Advisory Committee in July of 1979. The President opened the Baltimore White House Conference. Mrs. Carter keynoted the Kansas Conference on Families and Vice President Mondale met with the National Task Force. Domestic Policy Adviser Stuart Eizenstat keynoted the Research Forum, addressed the National Organization briefing and National Task Force. Key White House staff made themselves available as resource persons to the Conference. The White House Office on Administration produced the booklet "Listening to America's Families" and provided important technical assistance on the Final Report and several newsletters. The White House Drug Office developed special materials on family-based treatment of drug abuse.

Health and Human Services: Secretary Patricia Roberts Harris established a liaison group to provide full support and assistance to the Conference within HHS, the lead agency for the White House Conference on Families. Secretary Harris opened the Washington Hearings and keynoted the Los Angeles White House Conference. The regional offices of the Department provided invaluable assistance with WHCF hearings, and the three White House Conferences.

Other key contributions included:

Housing and Urban Development undertook a major study of restrictive rental practices against families.

National Endowment for the Humanities supported the National Research Forum on Family Issues.

National Endowment for the Arts provided assistance for the cultural events at each of the three Conferences.

The National Institute on Drug Abuse sponsored a series of workshops.

Commerce and **Census Bureau** produced a chartbook on families in the U.S.

Community Services Administration developed issue papers on low-income families.

National Institute for Mental Health developed the two-volume study "Families Today."

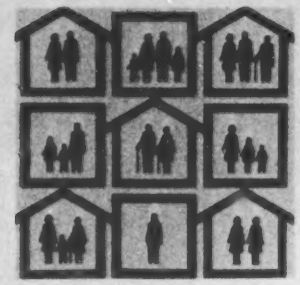
The following agencies helped with Conference hearings and logistics: **Defense, Justice, Interior, Veterans Administration.**

The following agencies provided staff on a loan basis: **Agriculture, HHS, Labor, Office of Personnel Management, National Archives.**

HUD Secretary Moon Landrieu announced nationwide study of discrimination against families at Connecticut hearings.

Census Data:

Facts on Families



A new sensitivity to families must be based on facts not hunches, on realities not wishful thinking. Because of the frequent confusion which surrounds the discussion of families, the WHCF asked the Census Bureau to share with us specific data on American Families and the changes affecting them. They developed for the delegates *American Families and Living Arrangements,* a set of 30 charts which pinpoint the realities of families today. Several charts are included in this Final Report to focus attention on key facts on families.

Chart 1.
Families, by Type, Selected Years 1955-1978

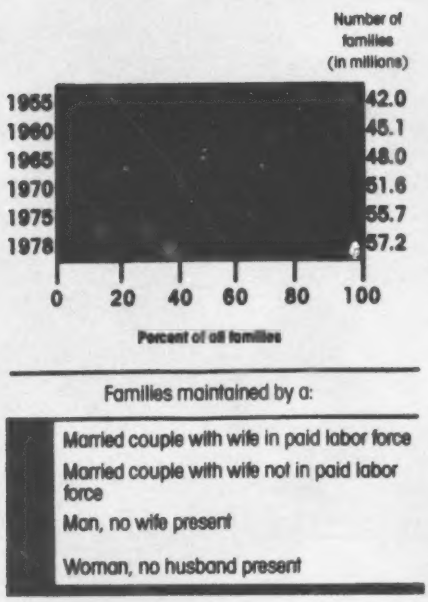
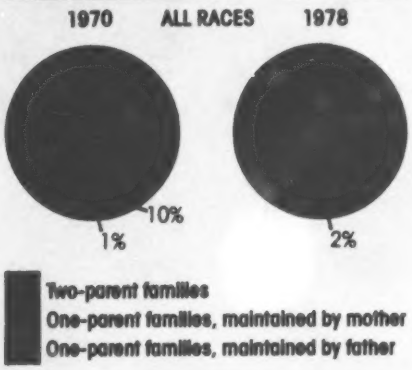

Number of families (in millions)
1955 42.0
1960 45.1
1965 48.0
1970 51.6
1975 55.7
1978 57.2
0 20 40 60 80 100
Percent of all families
Families maintained by a:
Married couple with wife in paid labor force
Married couple with wife not in paid labor force
Man, no wife present
Woman, no husband present

Chart 2.
One-Parent Families as a Proportion of All Families With Children Present: 1970 and 1978



Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census.

Chart 3.
Number and Rate of First Marriages, Divorces and Remarriages of Women: 1951-1977

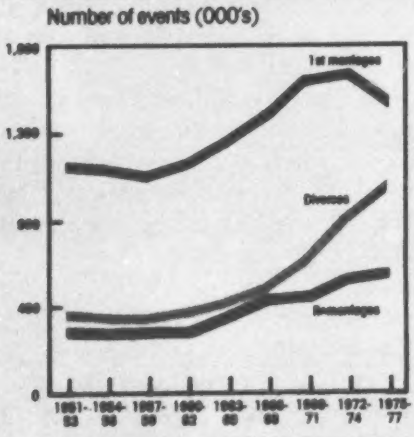
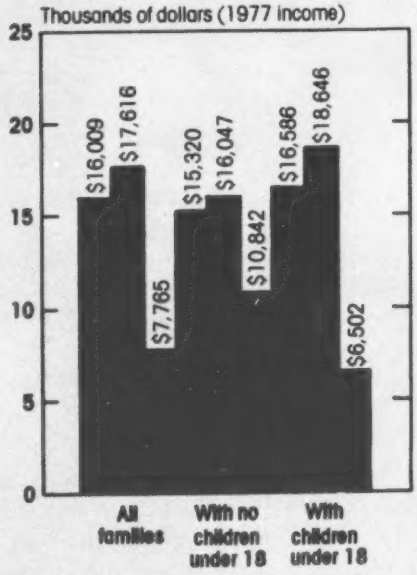


Chart 4.
Median Family Income, by Presence of Children and Type of Family: 1978



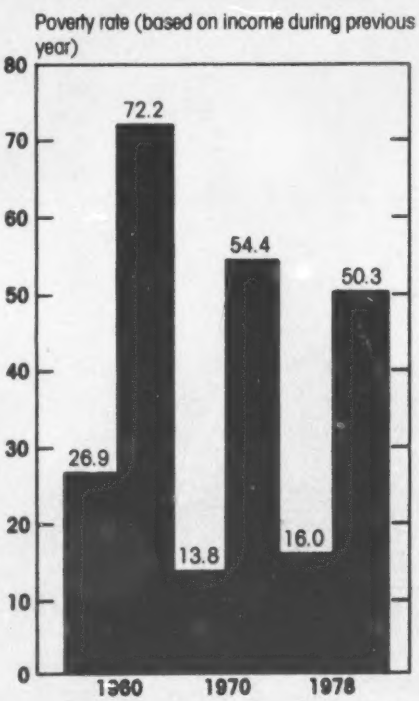
Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census.

All families

Married-couple families

Families maintained by women with no husband present

Chart 5.
Children in Poverty, by Family Type: 1960, 1970, and 1978



Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census.

Children in families

Children in families maintained by women with no husband present

Gallup Survey:

An In-Depth Look at Families

Dr. George Gallup, Jr.

No single event of the year-long White House Conference on Families revealed more about how American families view themselves than the Gallup Organization's survey of "American Families—1980."

Findings

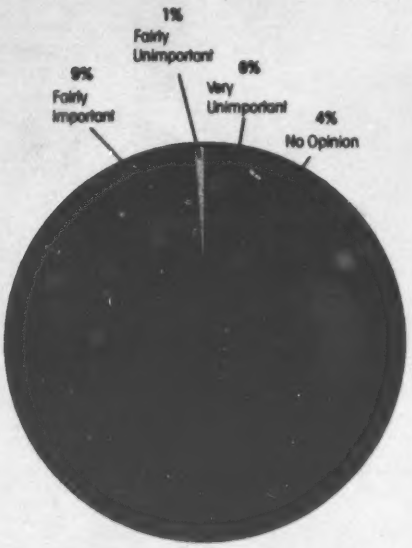
Generally, the study confirmed the strength and resiliency of families and reflected the stresses of contemporary society. It showed that nine of ten of the persons questioned are either very satisfied or mostly satisfied with their family life and that a clear majority—61 percent—believe their families are the most important element in their lives. Indeed, in the overview of his detailed findings, Gallup wrote: "Any belief that Americans do not place top priority on the family and family life is completely refuted by results of this survey. The findings represent a ringing endorsement of the importance of the family in American life."

Yet the findings also made it clear that all is not well with American families today. Nearly half the respondents feel family life has gotten worse in the last 15 years, and a third are dissatisfied with the future facing their families. A full 20 percent said they are aware of serious cases of child or spouse abuse where police or social workers were called to the scene.

Importantly, the study confirmed many of the findings of WHCF National Hearings and state activities held earlier — that growing numbers of citizens are concerned about government's insensitivity to families, that many workplace policies should be brought more in touch with family needs, and that drug and alcohol abuse are threatening many families.

Highlights of the survey included:

- A majority of Americans support changes in tax, health, welfare and housing laws to give greater consideration to families.
- There is strong support for changes in personnel policies at workplaces to help families—including flextime, sick leave for an employee if a family member is ill, more part-time employment,



How important is family life to you?

and the elimination of mandatory overtime.

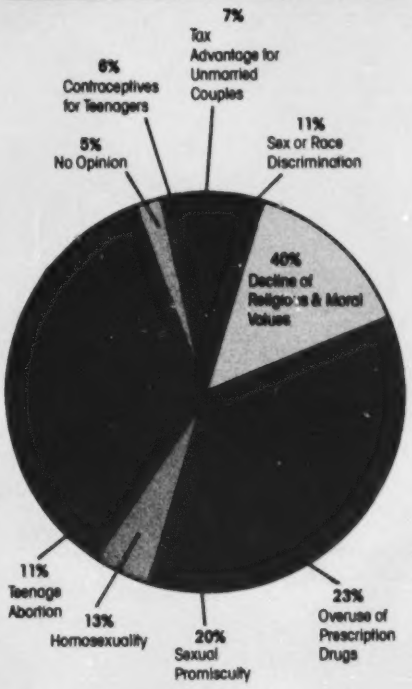
- The cost of living, energy costs, and government policies are rated the most important problems facing families.
- Health care assistance for the elderly living at home or with their families, assistance to poor families, and consideration of families when enacting laws, and making regulations are priority choices for governmental action to help families. Others are tax credits for families with handicapped children, guaranteed jobs for parents, and programs to enforce child support.
- A majority of Americans support tax credits to businesses and community groups to provide child care. A majority also support direct government funding of day care centers to help working mothers.
- Large majorities support sex education with parental consent and courses in marriage and family life, alcohol and drug abuse and parenting in the schools.
- A majority think television harms family life by over-emphasizing violence and sex.

Government Mandates

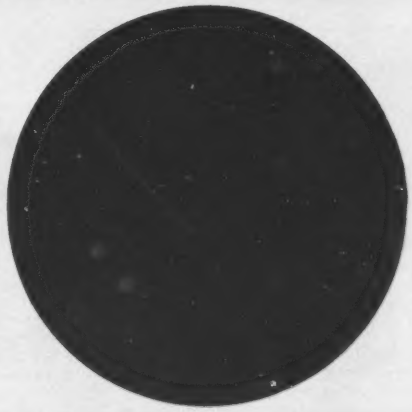
Significantly, nearly half the respondents said that the Federal government has an unfavorable influence on family life. State and local governments, the courts and our legal system did not fare much better. Government actions most widely called for by the respondents were:

- The government should provide health care assistance to elderly people living at home or with their families—not just to those in hospitals and nursing homes. (76%)
- Tax laws should be changed so that a married couple does not have to pay more in taxes than an unmarried couple in the same income bracket who are living together. (83%)
- Tax credits should be given to help meet part of child care costs incurred by families with working parents. (70%)
- State laws which refuse or reduce financial assistance to poor families if the father is living at home, even if he is unemployed or not capable of supporting his family, should be changed. (70%)
- Housing discrimination against families with children or against single-parent families should be prohibited. (57%)

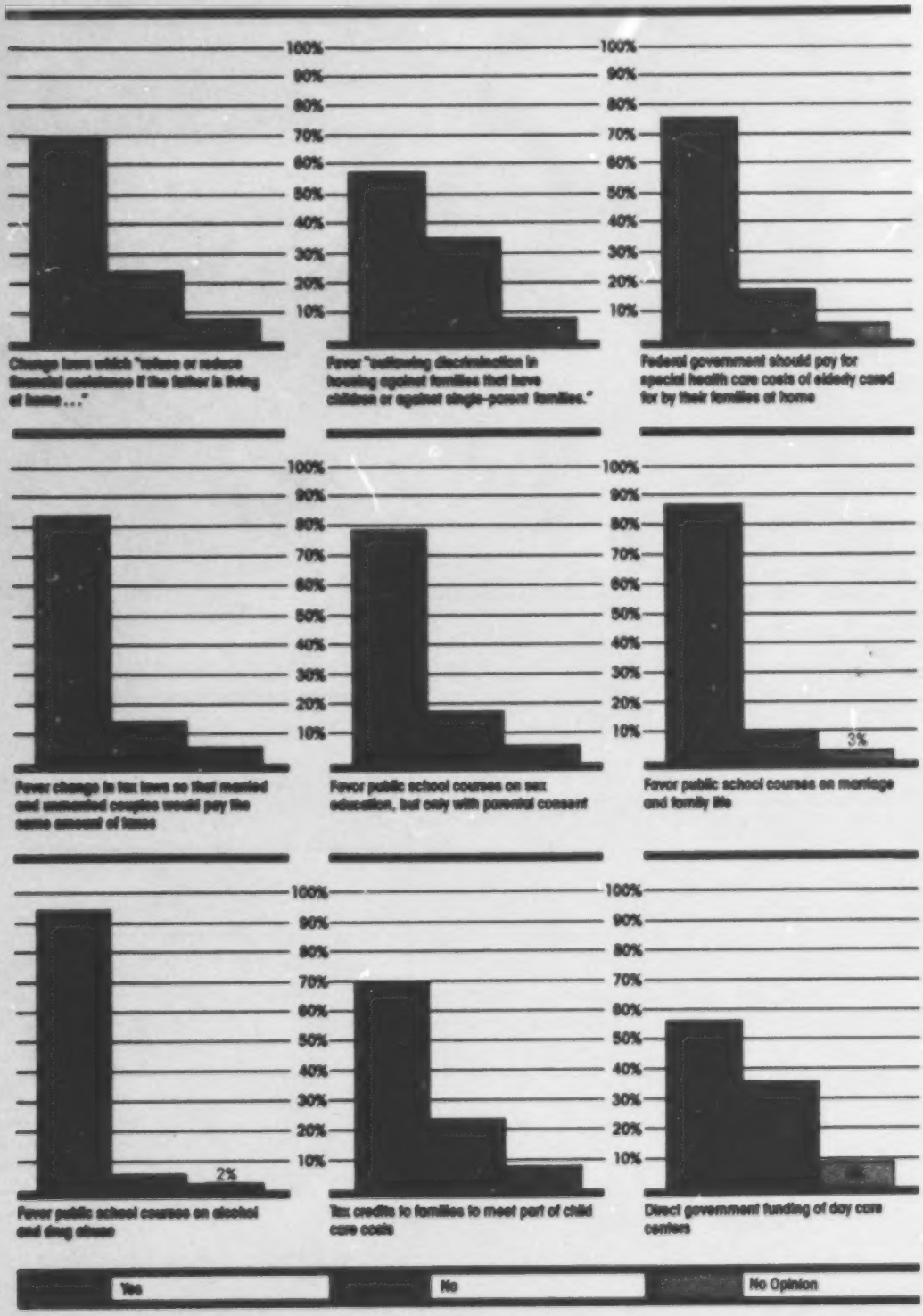
Overall, there was strong support for efforts to make government more overtly aware of its impact on families and build such a process into regular decision-making. The recommendations ultimately adopted by the three White House Conferences parallel quite closely the results of this groundbreaking study.



Three things most harmful to family life



Has family life gotten better or worse in the last fifteen years?


100%
90%
80%
70%
60%
50%
40%
30%
20%
10%
Change laws which "reduce or reduce financial assistance if the father is living at home..."
Favor "outlawing discrimination in housing against families that have children or against single-parent families."
Federal government should pay for special health care costs of elderly cared for by their families at home
Favor change in tax laws so that married and unmarried couples would pay the same amount of taxes
Favor public school courses on sex education, but only with parental consent
3%
Favor public school courses on marriage and family life
2%
Favor public school courses on alcohol and drug abuse
Tax credits to families to meet part of child care costs
Direct government funding of day care centers
Yes
No
No Opinion

IV
The Conferences: Debate and Consensus

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Conference Overview

In concept and approach, the White House Conference on Families marked a significant departure from White House Conferences of the past. While several have been productive and have led to significant change, most conferences have been single events involving appropriately certified experts and scholars, and held in Washington, D.C.

The WHCF National Advisory Committee based its decision to hold three White House Conferences on several factors. First the issues themselves called for a different approach. It was clear that the answers to problems and concerns facing millions of American families across the country were not to be found in the nation's Capitol (where some of the problems had apparently originated) but in the nation itself.

By going out to the country, the Conference could involve many more people and, at the same time, maximize a limited budget that could not take the strain of bringing a comparable number of people to Washington, D.C. Three White House Conferences also provided the opportunity for small group sessions where thirty people could be engaged in sharing views and formulating recommendations, as opposed to the involvement of a distinct minority of 300 in the impersonal setting of an auditorium.

Thursday

To ensure that the outcomes of each Conference could be combined into a truly national expression and an action agenda, the format for all three Conferences was identical. Each Conference opened on Thursday with a welcome from Chairperson Jim Guy Tucker, a moving slide tape presentation on families by Clay Nixon, and a keynote address by a speaker from the highest levels of the Administration. The Conference then moved quickly into four topic sessions where speakers and a panel of reactors presented delegates with background information and differing perspectives on each of the four major WHCF topic areas.

After a late afternoon Delegate Forum where delegates could speak out on the issues, the Conference moved into Work Group Sessions. Assigned by their own preference, delegates met in small groups to discuss one of twenty major issues. As in the Topic Sessions the emphasis of the Thursday evening work groups remained on exposition of the issues with discussion, but no votes or motions were permitted.

Friday

The most important work began on Friday morning. Meeting again in the 20 Work Group Sessions, the delegates addressed themselves to the challenge of developing, adopting and prioritizing three specific recommendations on their subject for presentation to the four major topic sessions later in the day.

On Friday afternoon, after a luncheon talk by a speaker of national renown, the delegates met again in four Topic Groups to review and vote on the recommendations they would submit to the Plenary Session on Saturday morning for a final vote. Each of the Topic Groups approved three recommendations from each Work Group for the Plenary Session, yielding a total of 60 possible recommendations for the Conference to consider.

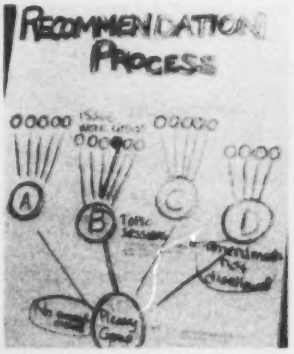
On Friday night a celebration of families featuring local performers at each Conference provided delegates with relaxation and a welcome break from their intensive all-day sessions.

Saturday

Saturday morning began with individual state caucus sessions for last minute discussion before voting, then moved into the Plenary Session. The Plenary set aside specific time for each of the four topic areas with delegates chosen by a random drawing speaking for or against recommendations on the floor. The voting was completed by 1:00 p.m. each day.

"I felt we were seeing democracy in action. There was very little personal animosity between disagreeing groups. It was very good that we could express differing views and everything was settled by votes."

Marie Crocker,
Pottstown, Pennsylvania



"I've been to conferences where three-fourths of the people remain silent and let the other fourth do all the talking. Here, everybody was talking. There was really enthusiasm."

Janet Horner, *Los Angeles Times*

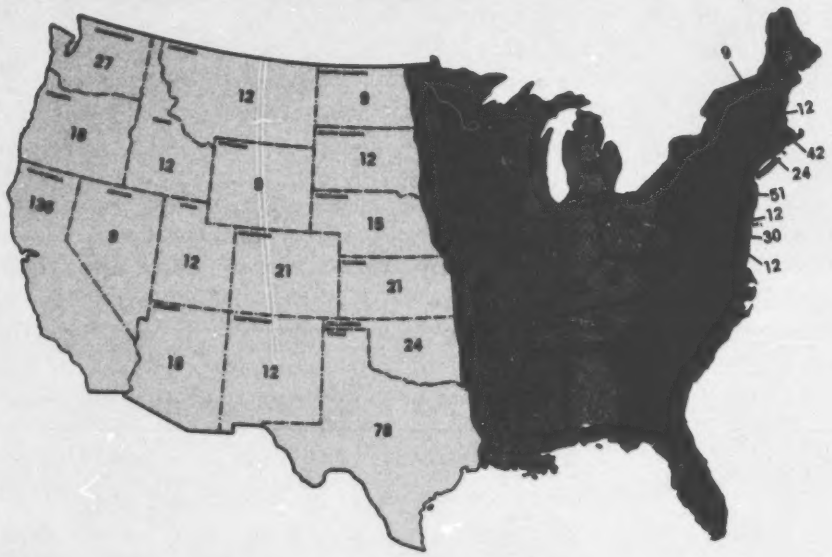
Delegates who spoke at the final voting session were selected at random from those who submitted cards indicating their desire to speak.

Early Saturday afternoon, delegates met in state caucuses to elect one of their number as a member of the National Task Force which would meet in Washington, D.C., August 19-20, 1980 to review all the recommendations and outline the substance of the final report.

The final session was held at 3:00 p.m. on Saturday with the Conference Chair sharing the voting results with the delegates. The closing ceremonies included a slidetape presentation consisting of photographs from the previous two and a half days against a background of Sister Sledge singing "We are Family," and a benediction.

Each Conference had its own character, its own set of tensions and expectations, its own achievements. The following pages attempt to capture those unique qualities with brief reviews of the events in Baltimore, Minneapolis, and Los Angeles.

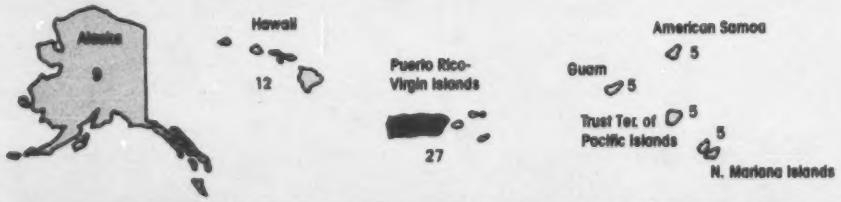
Number of Delegates Attending the White House Conferences



States Attending WHCF in Los Angeles

States Attending WHCF in Minneapolis

States Attending WHCF in Baltimore



The White House Conference in

Baltimore

The delegates were still streaming in at 2 p.m. when the color guard struck up the national anthem, officially opening the Conference. White House Conference on Families' Chairperson Jim Guy Tucker welcomed the delegates, sounding a theme he would repeat in Minneapolis and Los Angeles. Tucker commended the delegates and the state governors for making the Conference possible and challenged the group to "search for areas that offer progress and action." He cautioned delegates against wasting time haggling over divisive issues and urged them to turn their attention to issues that "while less passionate and volatile, nonetheless touch American families deeply and constantly."

Coretta Scott King, herself a member of the NAC, told the audience that modern pressures on families could not be ignored. "As a single parent for the last 12 years, I know some of those pressures," she said. "Many families feel terribly vulnerable."

After a greeting by Baltimore Mayor William D. Schaefer and a poignant slide-tape presentation on American families, the band broke into "Hail to the Chief" and President Carter strode to the podium to address the Conference he had called for.

> **"Consensus rather than controversy best describes the outcome of the first White House Conference on Families held in Baltimore last week—in spite of a few fireworks."**
> *New York Daily News*

President Carter: "Official America Lost Touch with Family America"

Following lighthearted and moving remarks about his own family, the President said, "I called for this conference because I was deeply concerned that official America had lost touch with family America . . . I hope that we will come out of this conference with a reaffirmation of families as a fundamental building block of our society. I hope we will unite around a commitment to strengthen and not weaken families, to help and not hinder families, to lift families up and not drag them down."

Reaffirming his commitment to the Conference, the President said, "I'll do all I can to ensure that your work does not end just as a report on the shelves in Washington."

The President's personal and direct appeal set the tone and mood for the next two and a half days and the following two Conferences as well.

> **"The Baltimore delegates were credible and persuasive because they concentrated on concerns they knew from personal experience."**
> *Minneapolis Tribune*

Friday: "Family Life Worse"

At mid-day on Friday, luncheon speaker George Gallup, Jr. shared with the delegates the results of a national survey on families undertaken by the Gallup Organization on behalf of the WHCF. His speech touched on both the strengths and stresses of modern families.

While there are very high levels of satisfaction with family life in the United States, he reported, "forty-five percent of us think family life has gotten worse in the last 15 years and a third of us are dissatisfied with the future facing our families."

Gallup then sounded a concern that was to come up numerous times at the Conferences. "Of things families are asking government, the one that impresses me most is the demand that government itself become more aware of its own impact on families. If indeed family impact statements or other mechanisms result, that in itself will make this Conference and this public opinion survey more than worthwhile."

Even as Gallup spoke of the complexities of family life, a group of 30 to 40 delegates were gathering in another part of the building to protest the proceedings. Opposed to some recommendations which were taking shape in the Conference sessions, the group chose to leave the Conference later that afternoon, rather than share their views and vote on the issues.

Connaught Marshner, at-large delegate and chairman of National Pro-Family Coalition, and Marian Wright Edelman, executive director of the Children's Defense Fund, addressed delegates in Baltimore.

Saturday: Substance Abuse, Home Care, Workplace, Top Concerns

On Saturday morning, state delegations met to caucus briefly and elect members to the WHCF National Task Force — a group that would later summarize recommendations from all three Conferences. The delegates then moved to the plenary voting session for a final showdown on the recommendations. More than 100 delegates spoke for and against the recommendations. Their names were drawn from a tumbler that contained the names of all delegates who wished to speak. The delegate votes were tallied by the computers of Control Data Corporation, with final results delivered by mid-afternoon.

Leading the list of recommendations with the strongest support at Baltimore were measures calling for:

1. An increased effort to counter drug and alcohol abuse.
2. Changes in health care regulations and tax laws to encourage home care for the aging.
3. Major changes in the workplace—such as flextime, more liberal leave policies, child care provisions — to accommodate family needs. (Flextime received the greatest number of "strongly agree" votes at the Conference.)
4. Elimination of the "marriage tax" which effectively penalizes married couples.
5. Recognition of full-time homemakers through changes in tax, social security and other laws and regulations.
6. Increase in the choice, availability and quality of child care.
7. Increased efforts to meet the health needs of families.
8. Greater recognition of, and assistance to, families with a handicapped member.
9. Efforts to increase employment opportunities.
10. Increased attention to, and services for, the prevention of family violence.
11. Changes in social security requirements to eliminate bias against families.
12. Reform of foster care and adoption procedures.
13. Increased emphasis on family life education in schools, as well as religious and community institutions.
14. Increased efforts to deal with teenage pregnancy.
15. Family impact analyses, statements and commissions as part of program and policy considerations.

Congressman Paul Simon of Illinois

> **"The delegates to the White House Conference on Families gave themselves a standing ovation Saturday at the conclusion of their three-day meeting at the Convention Center. They deserved it. They worked hard. And they came to grips with some of the seminal issues facing the American family."**
>
> *Baltimore Evening Sun*

The Maria Morales Spanish Dancers and other groups and soloists joined Baltimore delegates in an exciting "Celebration of Families" at the Morris Mechanic Theatre.

The White House Conference in

Minneapolis

Anne Wexler, Assistant to the President.

Anne Wexler, assistant to the President, delivered the Conference keynote address, stressing the importance of the Conference to the nation. "The President recognized," Ms. Wexler said, "as do you, that this day is long overdue. No institution receives more lip service and less help than American families. At long last, this summer American families have come together to systematically examine how government and our other institutions help, hurt or ignore families."

The United States, she explained, brings unique strengths to such a discussion. "In America, we start from a strong base. No other country in the world has the freedom, the strength or the moral tradition to undertake this kind of examination with the open involvement of so much of its citizenry," Ms. Wexler said. "But, working together with respect for different views and traditions, we can help make our country an even better place to raise a family."

With that charge, the delegates began addressing the challenge of producing an action agenda for families. They spent Thursday and Friday in the four topic sessions and twenty workgroups, debating and discussing, proposing and refining the recommendations which would come to a vote on the final day.

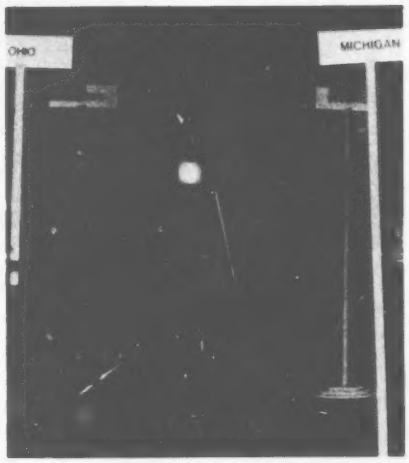
> **"There was a great feeling of optimism there, a great deal was accomplished. We worked extremely hard for three solid days. It was not a picnic."**
>
> Alice McCarthy, Michigan Delegate

Friday: "Let's Be Friends"

Ossie Davis

At noon on Friday, the delegates heard a moving address by luncheon speaker Ossie Davis, the noted actor, producer and writer. Davis mixed humor and insight with his inspirational reading of the poetry of Langston Hughes. The actor cautioned his audience against taking themselves too seriously: "Now I know you've been going at it hot and heavy here in Minneapolis," Davis said, "but remember, families were here long before you came here, and they're going to be around long after we go home. So let's be friends."

Saturday: "Impact on Families Top Issue"



The plenary voting session Saturday morning went smoothly despite a small protest. A group of about 90 delegates representing anti-abortion and essentially conservative constituencies, left the voting session to caucus, claiming the Conference included too few elected delegates and that the proceedings had not reflected their views. After caucusing for less than an hour, these delegates rejoined the other 450 delegates to vote on the recommendations developed in the workgroups.

Voting results in Minneapolis demonstrated that delegates had overcome their conflicts and had found agreement on a broad range of proposals. Leading the list of approved recommendations was concern for the negative effect of public policies on families and the recommendation that all "laws and regulations be analyzed in terms of their impact on families." This recommendation passed 530-28.

Rounding out the top ten recommendations were:

2. Support of basic social policies that assure equity and social justice for all individuals regardless of race, sex, age, handicap, religions, and cultural traditions and values.
3. Preventive programs through government and community sources to combat drug and alcohol abuse.
4. Development by the television industry of a rating system, including information on violence, crime and sexuality, with the assistance of a citizens' committee, to indicate program suitability for family viewing.
5. Alcohol abuse prevention supported by a 2% alcoholic beverage sales tax for treatment and prevention programs, raising the legal drinking age to 21, and warning labels on alcohol beverage containers.
6. A range of support services for families with disabled members.
7. Implementation of housing programs to provide improved shelter for older Americans living in rural America.
8. Improved services for older Americans, including adequate home, hospice, respite, health and day care.
9. To aid the handicapped, full funding and complete implementation of the Education for all Handicapped Children Act, the Rehabilitation Act and its amendments, and federal legislation concerning independent living centers and other housing options.
10. FCC licensing policy requiring station and community assessment of "impact on the moral standards and values of the families in its viewing area" prior to license issuance.

The next five recommendations called for parental involvement in education, an increase of the current deduction for child care expenses, public education programs to foster awareness of the handicapped and their problems, and an adequate living standard for older Americans. All these issues passed by overwhelming margins.

The Conference was more evenly divided on a few issues. Two recommendations to define the family as "two or more persons related by blood, heterosexual marriage, adoption or extended families," were passed and proved to be the only family definition measures approved during the three White House Conferences. A "Human Life Amendment" to outlaw abortion was narrowly defeated.

> **"Most pleasing to me were the recommendations that passed concerning farms and rural people. The vast majority of the delegates were urban people and yet I felt a real understanding and sympathy relating to rural problems."**
> Linda Nelson

Fourteen ethnic groups, ranging from the El Ballet Folklorico de Minnesota to the Ukrainian Dance Company, entertained Minneapolis delegates in the IDS Center.

Los Angeles

A stirring keynote address by Health and Human Services Secretary Patricia Roberts Harris, a national news-making announcement on rental housing restrictions, and a third set of proposals to strengthen American families were among the highlights of the third and final White House Conference on Families, held in Los Angeles, July 10-12, 1980.

For many, the first event of the Conference actually took place before the meeting had been called to order. The occasion was a special Mass, march and fiesta celebrating families, attended by some 2,000 persons on Olvera Street, the city's oldest and most historic area.

HHS Secretary Patricia Roberts Harris keynotes Los Angeles White House Conference.

Thursday: "Speak for all Americans"

After an invocation by Rabbi Leonard Beerman and greetings from Los Angeles Mayor Tom Bradley, more than 500 delegates heard Secretary Harris urge them to be constructively critical of government family policy. "Ask whether government policies related to the interest of families are effective... whether they are coherent... and whether the federal government commits the resources which are both needed and available to solving our problems." Secretary Harris urged the delegates to help define what unites us as a nation. "You must speak not just for yourselves, but for all Americans, transcending personal concerns in order to act on the nation's behalf."

"A Deeper Understanding"

Delegates spent Thursday and Friday developing, discussing and debating recommendations in 20 workgroups and four topic sessions. On Thursday evening, Conference participants gathered in the hotel's main ballroom to hear from actor Ed Asner, star of CBS-TV's "the Lou Grant Show."

"You may well find yourself finishing your three days here with a deeper understanding of each other—with a new respect and even

Actor Ed Asner

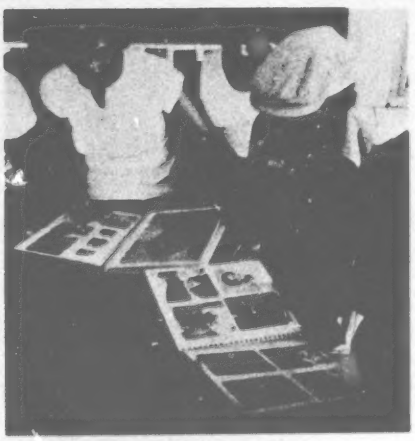
> **"The followers of Phyllis Schlafly and Betty Friedan are finally lining up on the same side of a few issues, which should make their targets, including the television industry, very nervous. The forum for this miracle is the White House Conference on Families and the goal is to develop policies for improving the lot of American families today."**
> *Elk Grove (Ill.) Herald*

affection for your fellow delegates," he told the group. "For while this Conference may be many things to many people, it is most certainly a forum for understanding and sharing, for reaching consensus on those problems where, if we speak as one voice, we can make a difference."

Of all the news that emerged from the three Conferences, none was more nationally significant than the Department of Housing and Urban Development's study on rental housing restrictions for families with children. Announced at a WHCF news briefing Friday by HUD Deputy Assistant Secretary Elizabeth A. Roistacher, the study revealed that 26 percent of the nation's rental housing units are in buildings which ban families with children.

The report was the first nationwide survey of renters and apartment managers. "Of particular significance," Dr. Roistacher told reporters, "is the fact that this practice is on the increase. Our survey shows that in 1974, 17 percent of the rental units were in buildings which had a 'no children' policy. As of 1980, the figure has increased to 26 percent."

Friday: "A Story of Love . . ."



At mid-day Friday, delegates listened as luncheon speaker Alex Haley, author of "Roots," provided new insights on one of America's best-read family sagas. Haley recounted many of the struggles of Kunta Kinte, Chicken George, and in more recent times, his own father.

"America took to 'Roots' because it is essentially a story of a family that worked together to overcome great hardships," Haley said. "It is a story of struggle and tragedy, but it is also a story of love and understanding. And I believe it reflects the great strength and resilience of families." Haley concluded by urging the delegates to work hard for what they believe. "All Americans will have gained something if you can convert your energies into help for our families. Do what is in your hearts and in your minds." Haley left the stage to thunderous applause.

Alex Haley

Saturday: Voting Results

Saturday morning the Hilton ballroom filled early as delegates prepared to vote on the recommendations. The workgroups and topic sessions had produced more than 50 proposals. More than 100 delegates alternated at the microphones. Following a brief protest of 50 delegates out of the nearly 600 present who marched to the stage to tear up one of their four ballots, the voting began in earnest.

The results showed that education, aid to the disabled and tax

reform dominated the top 15 proposals receiving huge margins of "yes" votes.

Topping the list was a call for a "partnership between parents and schools to insure quality education for each student," which passed 479-27. The remaining top 14, by rank, were:

2. A proposal to enforce existing laws supporting the disabled.
3. Efforts to "promote awareness and understanding of disabled persons and their families."
4. A call to analyze laws and regulations in terms of their impact on families.
5. Development of a full range of government programs responsive to the needs of the handicapped.
6. The promotion of community education "as a resource for families to help themselves and each other within their community."
7. Congressional investigation of the pornography industry.
8. FCC license and program criteria to discourage "the glorifying of drugs and alcohol," and to foster educational programming on substance abuse.
9. Revision of state and federal inheritance taxes and elimination of the marriage tax.
10. Tax revisions covering the marriage tax, home care of the elderly or disabled, inheritance tax for family members, and indexing of the personal income tax.
11. Efforts by business, labor and government to provide employment opportunities and maintain personnel policies compatible with a strong family life. This would include flextime, flexible leave policies for both sexes, and job sharing programs.
12. Establishment by the states and territories of professionally recognized courts of family law to deal only with legal matters affecting the family, such as divorce, custody, support, etc.
13. Government support of all child services, especially in the private sector, with tax incentives for charitable giving.
14. Support for the voluntary sector through income tax deductions.
15. Court-connected conciliation and mediation as an alternative and supplement to the adversary system.

And so the final White House Conference on Families had come to a close. A lot had happened in five weeks — three White House Conferences, 2000 delegates, more than 160 recommendations, dozens of caucuses, hundreds of speeches, conflict and ultimately, consensus. The Conference process, however, was far from over. There remained an important meeting of the WHCF's National Task Force in August to summarize the more than 150 recommendations, and then the critical task of working to convert them into action.

"Our luncheon speaker was Alex Haley, the author of 'Roots.' He talked about the continuation of life and family, discussing three areas — the ancestors who have gone before, the living who are presently occupying the earth, and the unborn yet to come. To me it made such sense for the continuation of the family and the human race."
Anne Leenknecht, Oregon Delegate

Japanese-American, Hispanic, Afro-American, and Eastern European dance groups provided a family celebration on historic Olvera Street for the Los Angeles delegates.

National Task Force:

Consolidating the Voices

The final working session of delegates to the White House Conference on Families took place August 19-20, 1980 when approximately 115 members of the National Task Force met in Washington, D.C. to summarize Conference recommendations and identify strategies for their implementation. The Task Force consisted of an elected representative from each of the 55 state and territorial delegations, 22 appointed delegates, and the 40 members of the National Advisory Committee. Its tasks were simple: to ensure accountability in the reporting of the Conference recommendations in the final report and to suggest strategies for implementation.

During the two-day meetings, Task Force members reviewed, consolidated, and summarized the more than 150 recommendations that had been produced at the three Conferences, being careful to maintain tone and intent. Then the Task Force discussed ways to convert the recommendations into action.

Mondale: "A Historic Charter for Reform"

The highlight of the Task Force session was Vice President Walter F. Mondale's address during a reception in the Indian Treaty Room of the Old Executive Office Building. The Vice President commended the group on its hard work and offered some personal comments on the Conference process.

"This Administration and our country is proud of the creative and effective way you've carried out the President's mandate," he told the group. "You've done so much ... national hearings ... state conferences ... a research forum ... not one but three White House Conferences ... and now this Task Force. Your Conference has revealed the high level of consensus on many issues of great importance to American families ... You have given us the basic charter for reform and improvement in America," he said. "We are going to take your advice seriously."

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Summarizing the Recommendations

Task Force members had five hours to review and summarize the recommendations in four topic groups: Families and Economic Well-Being; Families: Challenges and Responsibilities; Families and Human Needs; and Families and Major Institutions.

Recommendation summary statements and comparison charts approved in the topic groups were typed overnight for distribution to the Task Force members. After delegates reviewed the materials the next morning, discussion and approval of the proposals in their final form got underway, a process that involved four intense hours of suggested amendments and voting. The final summaries were approved overwhelmingly. One minority report signed by 18 of the 115 delegates voiced concern over "the growth of the federal bureaucracy" and expressed fears that the Conference "will be interpreted as a mandate to assume even greater power and influence."

The delegates then met in four groups to discuss implementation strategies and return for the final plenary to report on their discussions. They began with reports on implementation and advocacy at the state level. Many state delegations and committees were already at work trying to turn WHCF proposals into new policies and directions for state programs. They discussed how state delegates and committees could become an ongoing advocacy force.

The Task Force discussed how to use the six months of staffed WHCF national activity. They focused their attention on communicating the results of the Conference, involving a variety of organizations, and working with leaders in government and the

> **"More than 100,000 people participated in state conferences this past year and helped draw up the agenda for the national meetings in three cities this month. What was on their minds was not ERA or abortion, but government insensitivity to families, the need for quality child care, the enormous stress the economy is putting on families."**
>
> Judy Mann, *Washington Post* Columnist

private sector. They also discussed how to work with the new Office for Families and insure continued access to the White House and key decision-makers. They committed themselves to the task of turning their words into real change to benefit families.

"Already Making a Difference"

Stuart Eizenstat, assistant to the President for domestic affairs, told the group that because of the WHCF, "we now have a substantive agenda—a way to move beyond rhetoric to action on families. And that agenda comes not from government bureaus or Washington interest groups, but from thousands upon thousands of people," he said.

He promised that WHCF recommendations will be given careful attention. "My staff will review all the recommendations and will report back to me on what we can do at the White House level to speed up the implementation process. We will work with the federal departments to insure that they are reviewing and considering your proposals," he promised.

Eizenstat said he had just come from a meeting with the President on his economic revitalization program. "Your efforts are already making a difference," he reported. "Some of your recommendations may be implemented before the ink is dry," he told the Task Force.

Just one week later, President Carter proposed as part of his economic revitalization program a tax deduction to minimize the marriage tax penalty — the third highest recommendation of the Conference. Implementation was off and running.

Presidential Assistant Stuart Eizenstat with WHCF Chairman Jim Guy Tucker and NAC member Mary Cline Detrick.

The National Task Force gathers in the Indian Treaty Room to hear from Vice President Mondale and Stuart Eizenstat, assistant to the President.

Publications List White House Conference on Families

WHCF Report:
Listening to America's Families. *1980. 250 pp.*
Copies can be obtained for $6.50 by writing to the Superintendent of Documents, U.S. Government Printing Office, Washington, D.C. 20402, (stock number 040-000-00429-7).

Summary of WHCF Report:
Listening to American's Families. *1980. 100 pp.*
The Executive Summary will be available in early December, also through the Government Printing Office (stock number 040-000-00430-1) at a price to be determined.

Delegate Workbooks

Families and Economic Well-Being. *80 pp.*
Issue oriented workbook providing a factual introduction and highlighting state recommendations in five specific areas: economic pressures, families and work, tax policies, income security and status of homemakers.

Families: Challenges and Responsibilities. *111 pp.*
Issue oriented workbook providing a factual introduction and highlighting state recommendations in six specific areas: preparations for marriage and family life, specific supports for families, parents and children, substance abuse, family violence and aging.

Families and Human Needs. *100 pp.*
Issue oriented workbook providing a factual introduction and highlighting state recommendations in five specific areas: education, housing, health, child care and handicapping conditions.

Families and Major Institutions. *65 pp.*
Issue oriented workbook providing a factual introduction and highlighting state recommendations in four specific areas: government, media, community institutions and the judiciary.

National Hearings Summary. *Various pagings.*
Summarizes and analyzes the results of national hearings sponsored by the WHCF in seven cities from September 1979 to January 1980

State Summaries

Summary of State Reports. *Vol. 1 150 pp.*
State conference recommendations of those states attending the Baltimore WHCF.

Summary of State Reports. *Vol. 2 147 pp.*
State conference recommendations of those states attending the Minneapolis WHCF.

Summary of State Reports. *Vol. 3 166 pp.*
State conference recommendations of those states attending the Los Angeles WHCF.

Summary of State Reports. *Addendum. 132 pp.*
State conference recommendations submitted or revised after our printing deadline.

National Organizations Issues Resource Book. *Unpaged.*
Recommendations and position papers of 150 national organizations with an interest in the WHCF and family policy questions.

Listening to America's Families. *23 pp.*
Provides an introduction to the WHCF: its origins, goals, process, issues, and key personnel. Includes a calendar of Conference activities.

Newsletters

This irregularly issued newsletter chronicles the development of the WHCF.

Vol. 1, no. 1 August 1979. Contains President Carter's July 20, 1979 remarks on the WHCF with biographical notes on the 41 presidentially appointed National Advisory Committee (NAC) members and officers. Outlines the goals set by the NAC at its first meeting and lists the state coordinators and members of the Coalition for the White House Conference on Families.

Vol. 1, no. 2 November 1979. Summarizes the hearings held in Kansas, Tennessee and Colorado, the September state coordinators meeting, the September 7th NAC meeting and the national organizations briefing of September 11th.

Vol. 1, no. 3 January 1980. Discusses the state process guidelines and requirements including delegate selection, charts scheduled activities in each state, and summarizes the issues raised during the District of Columbia, Connecticut and Michigan WHCF national hearings.

Vol. 1, no. 4 February 1980. Recapitulates state accomplishments to date and charts activities in each state. Describes the Seattle hearings, and forthcoming National Research Forum on Family Issues and activities sponsored by other Federal agencies in conjunction with the WHCF.

Vol. 1, no. 5 March 1980. Outlines key events on the WHCF spring calendar, charts final state activities, and describes the at-large delegate selection process approved by the NAC.

Vol. 1, no. 6 May 1980. Analyzes the issues raised and the delegates selected at the state conferences, summarizes the results of the April 4th NAC meeting and the National Research Forum on Family Issues.

Vol. 1, no. 7 June 1980. Describes the Baltimore WHCF agenda, the state recommendations and the results of the Gallup Organization's national survey, American Families — 1980.

Vol. 1, no. 8 June 19, 1980. Provides the full text of the Baltimore recommendations with an analysis of the voting. Excerpts the President's opening remarks and reprints news items relating to the Conference.

Vol. 1, no. 9 July 10, 1980. Reprints the full text of the Minneapolis WHCF recommendations with an analysis of the voting and samples of the press coverage.

Vol. 1, no. 10 August 1980. Reprints the full text of the Los Angeles WHCF recommendations with an analysis of the voting. Lists the top recommendations from the three Conferences and also provides press items about the Los Angeles Conference.

Above publications can be obtained by writing to:

Superintendent of Documents
The United States Government Printing Office
Washington, D.C. 20401

The following items have been published in conjunction with the White House Conference on Families:

American Families — 1980: A Summary of Findings. Princeton: Gallup Organization, 1980. 55 pp. Processed.
This public opinion survey explores American attitudes toward families and the relationship of family life to government, business, media and other major institutions, and assesses how government and other major private institutions help, hurt or ignore families.
Available from the WHCF. Unabridged edition available from American Research Corporation, P.O. Box 7849, Newport Beach, CA 92660 for $49.00 plus $2.00 handling.

Bureau of the Census. *American Families and Living Arrangements.* Washington, 1980. 18 pp.
Provides a graphic overview of selected recent family trends in marriage, fertility, divorce, living arrangements and family economics.
S/N 003-001-91517-1. $2.00. Available from GPO.

Department of Housing and Urban Development. *How Well Are We Housed? 6. Large Households.* Washington, 1980. 9 pp.
Contains statistics on large households and a profile of their tenure and the physical characteristics of their housing with analysis by race, geographical distribution and income.
S/N 023-000-0624-3. $1.50. Available from GPO.

Housing Our Families. Washington, 1980.
Reports the results of a national study on restrictive rental practices against families with children and identifies key legal issues and pending legislation on this problem. Examines HUD programs serving families with children and how these programs can be improved.
Available from HUD User, P.O. Box 280, Germantown, Maryland 20767

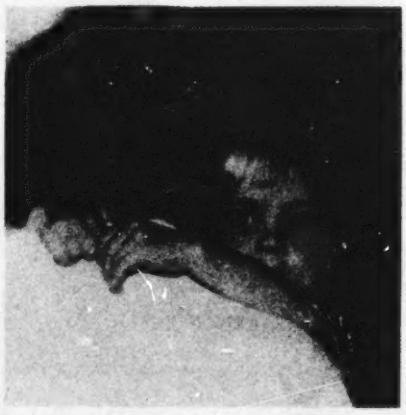
National Institute of Mental Health. *Families Today.* NIMH Science Mongraph no. 1. Washington, 1979.
Volume I: Contains articles on the family as an enduring unit, marriage and divorce, parents and children, and families and the outside world. 484 pp.
S/N 017-000-00955-5. $6.50. Available from GPO.

Volume II: Presents articles under the broad categories of families in distress, mental illness and the family, and strengthening the family. 529 pp.
S/N 017-000-00956-3. $8.00. Available from GPO.

U.S. Government Printing Office. *Families Today* Bibliography. Washington, 1980. 8 pp.
This bibliography lists publications available from the Government Printing Office on family topics.
Available free of charge from the White House Conference on Families or the Government Printing Office.

Audio-Visual Materials

An updated version of the audio-visual presentation, shown at each conference and produced by Clay Nixon, is now available as a film for use by groups working on WHCF implementation. Contact the WHCF. Also available for limited use are copies of an NBC documentary on the WHCF and other television coverage of the Conference.



"Our blurred political vision, I believe, has produced public policy that has not yet caught up with the changes the family is undergoing. It seems as if the last questions we ask of any policy is how would it affect parents and their children?"
Sharon Bailey, Denver Hearing